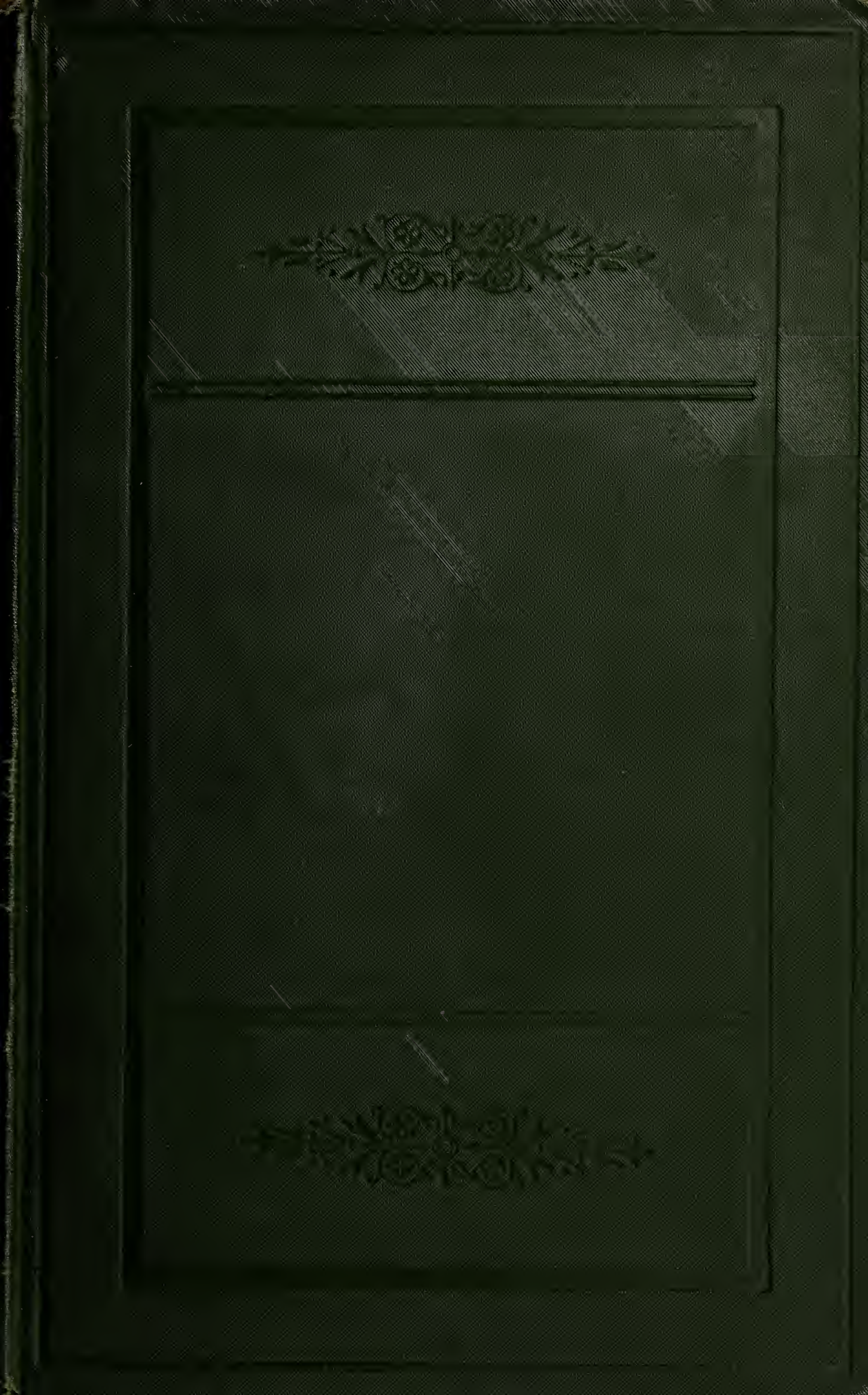

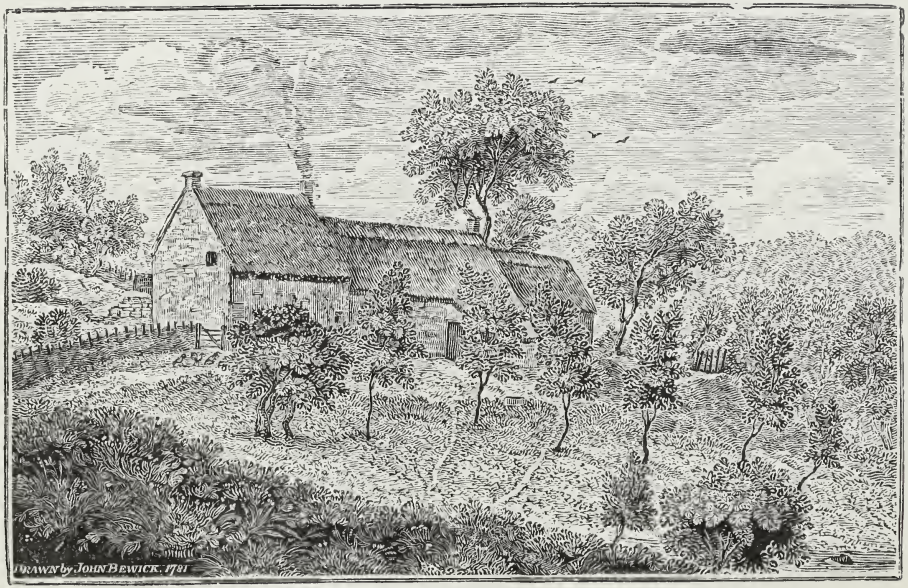

CHERRYBURN.

A

MEMOIR

OF

THOMAS BEWICK,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

EMBELLISHED BY

NUMEROUS WOOD ENGRAVINGS,

DESIGNED AND ENGRAVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR A WORK ON
BRITISH FISHES, AND NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED.

Newcastle-on-Tyne:
PRINTED BY ROBERT WARD, DEAN STREET,
FOR JANE BEWICK, GATESHEAD.

London:
LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMAN, AND ROBERTS,
AND SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.
1862.

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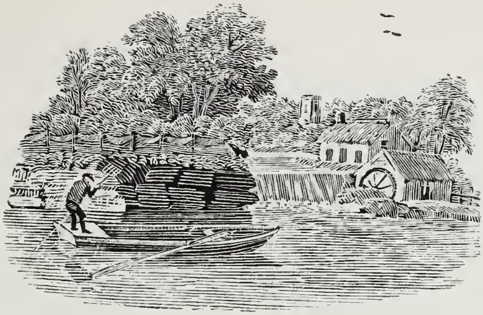
" While speaking of the English school, I must not omit to notice a truly original genius, who, though not a painter, was an artist of the highest order in his way—Thomas Bewick, the admirable designer and engraver on wood. His works, indeed, are of the smallest dimensions, but this makes it only the more surprising that so much interest could be comprised within such little spaces. The wood cuts that illustrate his books of natural history may be studied with advantage by the most ambitious votary of the highest classes of art—filled as they are by the truest feeling for nature, and though often representing the most ordinary objects, yet never, in a single instance, degenerating into common-place. The charming vignettes that ornament these books abound in incidents from real life, diversified by genuine humour, as well as by the truest pathos—of which the single figure of a shipwrecked sailor saying his prayers on a rock, with the waves rising round him, is an instance. There is often in these little things a deep meaning that places his art on a level with styles which the world is apt to consider as greatly above it, in proof of which I would mention the party of boys playing at soldiers among graves, and mounted on a row of upright tombstones for horses; while for quaint humour, extracted from a very simple source, may be noticed a procession of geese which have just waddled through a stream, while their line of march is continued by a row of stepping-stones. The student of landscape can never consult the works of Bewick without improvement. The backgrounds to the figures of his Quadrupeds and his Birds, and his vignettes, have a charm of nature quite his own. He gives us, in these, every season of the year ; and his trees, whether in the clothing of summer, or in the nakedness of winter, are the trees of an artist bred in the country. He is equally true in his little home scenes, his farm-yards and cottages, as in the wild coast scenery, with the flocks of sea birds wheeling round the rocks. In one of these subjects there stands a ruined church, towards which the sea has encroached, the rising tide threatening to submerge a tombstone raised " to perpetuate the memory," &c. Bewick resembles Hogarth in this, that his illustrations of the stories of others are not to be compared with his own inventions. His feeling for the beauties of nature as they were impressed on him directly, and not at second-hand, is akin to the feeling of Burns, and his own designs remind me, therefore, much more of Burns than the few which he made from the poet."—*Leslie's Hand Book for Young Painters.*



PREFACE.

THE anxiety necessarily attendant upon the publication of this volume being now brought to a close, it only remains to apologise for the delay, for which many reasons might be adduced, and to express a hope that it may be received with the same favour which has for so long a period been kindly extended to the works of Thomas Bewick. It may be matter of interest to many of his admirers to learn that the whole of the wood cuts now in the hands of the family are in as good preservation as when they left the graver.*

This volume was considerably advanced at press before it was decided to append the cuts of the

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* As evidence of which, it is impossible to distinguish the cuts introduced into the last edition of "Birds" from those previously published. This is due to the well-known fact, as mentioned at page 243, that an immense number of impressions may be taken from a wood block; and to the system, peculiar to Thomas Bewick, of lowering all the more delicate parts.

Fishes; an arrangement which it is hoped may meet with general approbation—more particularly as, by that means, the cuts and the vignettes* engraved for the History of Fishes will thus go together. Much additional matter respecting the Fishes, which had occupied so much time and attention, would doubtless have found a place in the pages of the Memoir, had not the hand of Death so suddenly arrested the labours of the Author. From the ample materials which exist, the Appendix might have been greatly extended, but it is now felt to be desirable to bring the publication to a termination as speedily as possible.

J. B.

Gateshead-on-Tyne, May, 1862.

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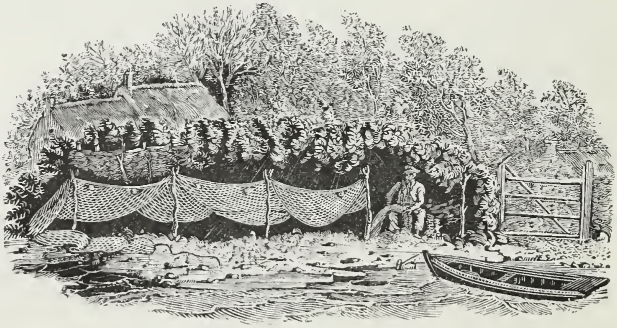
* The vignette placed at page 286—a view of Cherryburn, with Mickley Bank in the distance, and a funeral procession descending the sloping pasture towards the boat, waiting to convey it across the Tyne to the last resting-place of the family at Ovingham—appears, from the date attached, to be the last vignette ever executed by Thomas Bewick.



It is at this period when the full value of a well-spent life will shine with full effulgence upon the mind, and spread over it a self-approbation of more worth than all the riches of the world. An ill-spent life, on the contrary, will bring forward its recollections, and send the guilty and polluted body unregretted to the grave, and the degraded soul to the Giver of it, to be disposed of, in the justice and mercy it will be found to deserve.—*Loose Note.*

T. B.

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MEMOIR OF THOMAS BEWICK.

CHAPTER I.

Tynemouth, November, 1822.

My Dear Jane,

It is in compliance with your wish that I have, after much hesitation and delay, made up my mind to give you some account of my life, as it may at a future day amuse you and your brother and sisters in your passage through the crooked as well as the pleasant paths of the world. I will commence by giving you some account of your pedigree as far back as I can.

My grandfather, Thomas Bewick, farmed the lands of Painshaw Field and Birches Nook, near Bywell, and also the Colliery on Mickley Bank, or Mickley Common—how long since I know not, but it might probably be about the year 1700. He had the character of being one of the most intelligent, active, and best farmers on Tyneside, and it was said that, by his good management and great industry, he became very rich; but, except his being an expert angler, I know little more about him. My grandmother's maiden name was Agnes Arthur, the daughter of a laird of that name at Kirkheaton, at which place my father was born in the year 1715, while his mother was there (I believe) on a visit to her friends.

My maternal grandfather, Thomas Wilson, and my grandmother, whose maiden name was Hannah Thompson, lived at Ainstable, in Cumberland; but whether he was curate of the parish of that place, or parish clerk, I do not know. It is certain, however, that he was one or the other, and that he taught a school there; and, from the circumstance of his teaching his sons, and some of his daughters, Latin, I conclude he taught some of his scholars the same language. When he died, his eldest son, Christopher, became possessed of his freehold property, consisting of a house, &c., and a few fields adjoining. The rest of his family were left little beside a good education, and were spread abroad in the world to do the best they could for themselves. In this state of their affairs, my mother, Jane, and her youngest sister, Hannah, were taken by a distant relation, a Mrs. Gregson, of Appleby, to remain with her until she could get them places to live at. About this time, the Rev. Christopher Gregson had been appointed to the curacy of Ovingham, and wanted a housekeeper; and my mother, though young, was thought able to undertake that office, and accordingly engaged to perform it.

Your maternal grandfather's name was Robert Elliot, and your grandmother's Jane Forster. He farmed the land of Woodgate, near Bill Quay, where your mother was born. He afterwards removed to a farm at Ovingham, where he died in 1777, leaving the character of a sensible, honest, and industrious man.

How long my mother lived with Mr. Gregson, before her marriage, I know not; but from him I afterwards learned that she was a valuable servant to him, both with respect to his house-keeping concerns, and for the occasional assistance she afforded him in hearing his pupils their Latin tasks. From Ovingham, in the year 1752, she married my father, and went to live with him at Cherry-burn House, near the small village or Hamlet of Eltringham, where all their family, of which I was the eldest, were born. The family consisted of myself and brothers, John and William; and my sisters Hannah, Agnes, Ann, Sarah, and Jane. Sarah died at the age of 16; the rest were reared to maturity, and were sent off, one way or another, into the world.

In August, 1753, I was born, and was mostly entrusted to the care of my aunt Hannah, (my mother's sister), and my grandmother, Agnes Bewick; and the first thing I can remember was, that the latter indulged me in every thing I had a wish for; or, in other words, made me a great "pet." I was not to be "snubbed" (as it was called), do what I would; and, in consequence of my being thus suffered to have my own way, I was often scalded and burnt, or put in danger of breaking my bones by falls from heights I had clambered up to.

The next circumstance, which I well remember, was that of my being sent to Mickley School when very young; and this was not done so much with a view to my learning, as to keep me out of "harm's way." I was some time at this school without making much progress in learning my letters or spelling small words; the master, perhaps, was instructed not to keep me very close at my book; but, in process of time, he began to be more and more severe upon me; and I see clearly at this day, that he frequently beat me when faultless, and also for not learning what it was not in my power to comprehend. Others suffered in the same way. He was looked upon as a severe, or "cross," man, and did not spare his rod. He was tall and thin; and, with a countenance severe and grim, he walked about the school-room, with the tawse or a switch in his hand. He, no doubt, thought he was keeping the boys to their lessons, while the gabbering and noise they made, was enough to stun any one, and impressed the people passing by with the idea that Bedlam was let loose. How long he went on in this way, I do not recollect; but, like many others of his profession, who were at that time appointed to fill the most important office of a teacher, no pains had been taken to enquire whether he possessed the requisite qualifications befitting him for it. He went on with a senseless system of severity, where ignorance and arrogance were equally conspicuous. Conduct like this, sours the minds of some boys, renders others stupid, and serves to make all more or less disgusted with learning. Upon some occasion or other, he ordered me to be flogged; and this was to be done by what was called "hugging," that is, by mounting me upon the back of a stout boy, who kept hold of my hands over his shoulders while the posteriors were laid bare, where he supposed he could do the business freely. In this instance, however, he was mistaken; for, with a most indignant rage, I sprawled, kicked, and flung, and, I was told, bit the innocent boy, on the neck, when he instantly roared out, and threw me down; and, on my being seized again by the old man, I rebelled, and broke his shins with my iron-hooped clogs, and ran off. By this time, the boy's mother, who was a spirited woman, and lived close by, attracted by the ferment that was raised, flew (I understood) into the school-room, when a fierce scold ensued between the master and her. After this I went no more to his school, but played the truant every day, and amused myself by making dams and swimming boats, in a small burn, which ran through a place then called the "Colliers Close Wood," till the evening, when I returned home with my more fortunate or more obedient school-fellows.

How long it was before my absence from school was discovered, I know not, but I got many severe beatings from my father and mother, in the interval between my leaving the school and the old master's death. As soon as another schoolmaster (James Burn) was appointed, I was sent to him; and he happened to be of a directly opposite character to the late one. With him I was quite happy, and learned as fast as any other of the boys, and with as great pleasure. After the death of this much respected young man, who lived only a very few years after his appointment, my learning any more at Mickley school was at an end.

Some time after this, my father put me to school under the care of the Rev. C. Gregson, of Ovingham; and well do I remember the conversation that passed between them on the occasion. It was little to my credit; for my father began by telling him that I was so very unguidable that he could not manage me, and he begged of my new master that he would undertake that task, and they both agreed that "to spare the rod was to spoil the child." This precept was, I think, too severely acted upon, sometimes upon trivial occasions and sometimes otherwise.

I was for some time kept at reading, writing, and figures,—how long, I know not, but I know that as soon as my question was done upon my slate, I spent as much time as I could find in filling with my pencil all the unoccupied spaces, with representations of such objects as struck my fancy; and these were rubbed out, for fear of a beating, before my question was given in. As soon as I reached Fractions, Decimals, &c., I was put to learn Latin, and in this I was for some time complimented by my master for the great progress I was making; but, as I never knew for what purpose I had to learn it, and was wearied out with getting off long tasks, I rather flagged in this department of my education, and the margins of my books, and every space of spare and blank paper, became filled with various kinds of devices or scenes I had met with; and these were accompanied with wretched rhymes explanatory of them. As soon as I filled all the blank spaces in my books, I had recourse, at all spare times, to the gravestones and the floor of the church porch, with a bit of chalk, to give vent to this propensity of mind of figuring whatever I had seen. At that time I had never heard of the word "drawing;" nor did I know of any other paintings besides the king's arms in the church, and the signs in Ovingham of the Black Bull, the White Horse, the Salmon, and the Hounds and Hare. I always thought I could make a far better hunting scene than the latter: the others were beyond my hand. I remember once of my master overlooking me while I was very busy with my chalk in the porch, and of his putting me very greatly to the blush by ridiculing and calling me a conjurer. My father, also, found a deal of fault for "mispending my time in such idle pursuits;" but my propensity for drawing was so rooted that nothing could deter me from persevering in it; and many of my evenings at home were spent in filling the flags of the floor and the hearth-stone with my chalky designs.

After I had long scorched my face in this way, a friend, in compassion, furnished me with some paper upon which to execute my designs. Here I had more scope. Pen and ink, and the juice of the brambleberry, made a grand change. These were succeeded by a camel-hair pencil and shells of colours; and, thus supplied, I became completely set up; but of patterns, or drawings, I had none. The beasts and birds, which enlivened the beautiful scenery of woods and wilds surrounding my native hamlet, furnished me with an endless supply of subjects. I now, in the estimation of my rustic neighbours, became an eminent painter, and the walls of their houses were ornamented with an abundance of my rude productions, *at a very cheap rate.* These chiefly consisted of particular hunting scenes, in which the portraits of the hunters, the horses, and of every dog in the pack, were, in their opinion, *as well as my own*, faithfully delineated. But while I was proceeding in this way, I was at the same time deeply engaged in matters nearly allied to this propensity for drawing; for I early became acquainted, not only with the history and the character of the domestic animals, but also with those which roamed at large.

The conversations of the Nimrods of that day, in which the instincts and peculiar properties of the various wild animals were described in glowing terms, attracted my keenest attention; and to their rude and lengthened narratives I listened with extreme delight. With me they made a winter's evening fly fast away. At holiday times,—and at other times when prevented by the floods of the Tyne from getting across to school,—I was sure, with the most ardent glee, to make one of the number in the hunting parties which frequently took place at that time; whether it might be in the chase of the fox or the hare, or in tracing the foumart in the snow, or hunting the badger at midnight. The pursuing, bating, or killing, these animals, never at that time struck me as being cruel. The mind had not as yet been impressed with the feelings of humanity. This, however, came upon me at last; and the first time I felt the change happened by my having (in hunting) caught the hare in my arms, while surrounded by the dogs and the hunters, when the poor, terrified creature screamed out so piteously,—like a child,—that I would have given anything to have saved its life. In this, however, I was prevented; for a farmer well known to me, who stood close by, pressed upon me, and desired I would "give her to him;" and, from his being better able (as I thought) to save its life, I complied with his wish. This was no sooner done than he proposed to those about him, "to have a bit more sport with her," and this was to be done by first breaking one of its legs, and then again setting the poor animal off a little before the dogs. I wandered away to a little distance, oppressed by my own feelings, and could not join the crew again, but learned with pleasure that their intended victim had made its escape.

The "musical din" of the hounds still continued to have its charms, and I still continued to follow them; but from that day forward, I have ever wished that this poor, persecuted, innocent creature might escape with its life. The worrying of foxes, the baiting of foumarts, otters, badgers, &c., did not awaken in me similar feelings; for in the fierce conflicts between them and the dogs, there was something like an exchange of retaliation, and not unfrequently the aggressors were beaten; and I have with pleasure seen that wonderfully courageous animal, the badger (with fair play), beat the dogs of a whole neighbourhood, one after another, completely off.

In the vermin-hunting excursions in the depth of winter, while the whole face of nature was bound in frost and covered with deep snow, in traversing through bogs, amidst reeds and rushes, I have often felt charmed with the sight of birds,—flushed, and sometimes caught, by the terrier dogs,—which I had never seen or heard of before; and I am still in doubt whether some of them have not escaped being noticed as British birds.

These were the diversions of the winter months, which I enjoyed in an extreme degree, amidst the storm and the tempest. In that season I was also sometimes better employed in looking after a small flock of sheep on the fell, a part of which was my own.* The extremity of the weather had taught them to seek a place of shelter under a steep but low "brae," overhung with whins, under which, in such weather, I was almost certain to find them and their associates all huddled together. To this place, through wreaths of snow, I early bent my way, with a bundle of hay on my back, and my pockets sometimes filled with oats, which I distributed amongst them. Upon these occasions, though at other times extremely wild, they were quite tame, and seemed to know me.

From my sheep thus drawing into shelter, gave rise to an opinion I formed, and which has been confirmed by long reflection, that much may yet be done to protect the larger flocks from being overblown and lost on the bleak moors, in great snow storms. Were long avenues made by double rows of whin hedges, planted parallel to each other at about six feet asunder, and continued in the form of two sides of a square, with the whins of each side drawn together, and to grow interplatted at the tops, so as to form an arched kind of roof, the sheep would, on instinctively seeing the coming storm, immediately avail themselves of such asylums, and particularly in the lambing season. In the corner of the angle of this square, the shepherd might have his hovel, thatched with heather and ling, and his beds for himself and his dogs, made of the same materials; and the whole of this "bield" might be rendered so snug as greatly to defy the severity of the winter's drifting blasts and wreaths of snow.

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* They were of the long-legged, black-faced kind, which were almost the only sort at that time kept in this part of the country. The *improved breed*, with their fatting qualities, were then not known. The mutton of the former eats like dark, juicy venison, while that of the latter puts one in mind of blubber.

At that time of life, every season had its charms; and I recollect well of listening with delight, from the little window at my bed-head, to the murmuring of the flooded burn which passed my father's house, and sometimes roused me from my bed, to see what it was like. After this, my first and common employment was to "muck" the byer; and, when the servant girl did not come soon enough, I frequently tried my hand at milking the cows; and I was always particularly keen of being there in snow storms. When this was the case, within the byer door, I snugly watched the appearance of various birds, which passed the little dean below, and which the severity of the weather drove from place to place, in search of shelter. With the sight of my intimate acquaintances, the robins, wrens, blackbirds, sparrows, a solitary crow, and some others, I was not much attracted, but always felt an extreme pleasure and curiosity in seeing the more rare visitants,—such as the woodcock, the snipe, and other waders, with the red wings, fieldfares, &c.,—make their appearance.

The winter evenings were often spent in listening to the traditionary tales and songs, relating to men who had been eminent for their prowess and bravery in the border wars, and of others who had been esteemed for better and milder qualities, such as their having been good landlords, kind neighbours, and otherwise in every respect bold, independent, and honest men. I used to be particularly affected with the warlike music, and with the songs relative to the former description of characters; but with the songs regarding the latter, a different kind of feeling was drawn forth, and I was greatly distressed, and often gave vent to it in tears. These songs and "laments" were commemorative of many worthies; but the most particular ones that I now remember were those respecting the Earl of Derwentwater, who was beheaded in the year 1715, and was looked upon as having been a victim to the cruelty of the reigning family, and who was venerated as a saint upon earth. It was said that the light from Heaven attended his corpse to the vault at Dilston Hall, and that prosperity would shine no more upon Tyneside. Then followed the sorrowful remembrances of those that were dead and gone. To sigh over them was unavailing; they had filled the space allotted to them on this side of Time, and the winds had blown over their silent graves for ages past. The predictions that the mansions of those that remained would soon, for want of heirs, become desolate—these and such like melancholy reflections made a deep impression on my mind; and I have often since, with feelings of extreme regret, beheld these mansions, once the seats of hospitality, dilapidated, and the families which once occupied them extinct and forgotten.

When the winter began somewhat to abate of its rigours, or in the early spring, it was a common job for me, before setting off to school, to rise betimes in the morning,—as indeed I was always accustomed to do,—and equipt with an apron, an old dyking mitten, and a sharpened broken sickle, to set off amongst the whin bushes, which were near at hand, to cut off their last year's sprouts. These were laid into a corner till the evening, when I stript, and fell to work to "cree" them with a wooden "mell," in a stone trough, till the tops of the whins were beaten to the consistency of soft, wet grass; and, with this mess, I fed the horses before I went to bed, or in the morning as occasion might require. They were shy about eating this kind of provender at first, and I was obliged to mix oats with it; but they soon became so fond of it, alone, that there was no need of any mixture. I know not whether a scarcity of fodder first gave rise to the suggestion of using this expedient, or it was tried as an experiment; but certain it is that this kind of food agreed so well with the horses that they became soon very sleek, and cast their winter coats of hair long before other horses that were fed in the common way. Cows would not eat the whin tops thus prepared, but, in a winter of scarcity, I have known all hands at work in cutting ivy from the trees, and even small ash twigs, to be given to the cattle as fodder.

CHAPTER II.

From the little window at my bed-head, I noticed all the varying seasons of the year; and, when the spring put in, I felt charmed with the music of birds, which strained their little throats to proclaim it. The chief business imposed upon me as a task, at this season, was my being set to work to "scale" the pastures and meadows; that is, to spread the mole-hills over the surface of the ground. This, with gardening, and such like jobs, was very hungry work, and often made me think dinner was long in coming; and, when at last it was sent to me, be it what it might, I sat down on the "lown" side of a hedge and eat it with a relish that needed no sauce.

As soon as the bushes and trees began to put forth their buds, and make the face of nature look gay—this was the signal for the angler to prepare his fishing tackle. In doing this I was not behind hand. Fishing rods, set gads, and night lines were all soon made fit for use, and with them, late and early, I had a busy time of it, during the summer months, until the frosts of autumn forbade me to proceed. The uneasiness which my late evening wadings by the waterside gave to my father and mother, I have often since reflected upon with regret. They could not go to bed with the hopes of getting to sleep, while haunted with the apprehension of my being drowned; and well do I remember to this day my father's well-known whistle, which called me home. He went to a little distance from the house, where nothing obstructed the sound, and whistled so loud, through his finger and thumb, that in the still hours of evening it might be heard echoing up the vale of the Tyne, to a very great distance. This whistle I learned to imitate, and answered it as well as I could, and then posted home.

From early in the morning till night, I was scarcely ever out of an action either good or bad; or, when not kept close at school, or in doing jobs such as those I have described, I was almost constantly engaged in some mischievous prank or other; but with a detail of these it would be wearisome to load my narrative: they were occasioned by the overflowings of an active, wild disposition. At one time, in imitation of the savages described in "Robinson Crusoe,"—or some other savages,—I often, in a morning, set off *stark naked* across the fell, where I was joined by some associates, who, in like manner, ran about like mad things, or like Bedlamites who had escaped. Climbing the tall trees at Eltringham for rook nests, at the hazard of breaking our necks or our bones, was another piece of business which employed our attention. I was also engaged in another equally dangerous. Having formed the resolution of curing a vicious, "runaway" horse belonging to my father, which no one durst mount, I, however, took the opportunity, when out of sight of any of the family, to do so. With my hand entwined in his mane, and bare-backed, I set him a-going, and let him run over "sykes" and burns, up hill and down hill, until he was quite spent. In a short time I discovered that, to make him run at all, he must be whipt to it. At other times I swam him in the river. This, and such like treatment, made him look ill, and quite tamed him.

I have often since shuddered at the thoughts of doing these and such like desperate acts, and wondered how I escaped; but neither caution nor fear had at that time taken a place in the mind; on the contrary, any uncommon or frightful exploit had charms in it that I could not resist. One of these pranks, however, attracted the attention of the neighbourhood, brought me into a great dilemma, and occasioned me a severe beating. I engaged a constant associate, who was ever ready at my command to help me, as soon as I communicated any design to him. I had discovered two oxen in a little savannah, or bit of grazing ground, surrounded with hazel and other bushes, near the brink of the river. Thither we went in order to enjoy so tempting a sight as to see them plunge overhead into the flood. When all was ready, we suddenly, with long branches in our hands, sprang upon them from the bushes overhanging the precipice, the danger of which they did not see; and they were plunged, with such a *delightful dash,* overhead into the river! They, however, happened to be no worse for it; for they were driven down by the rapid current of the flood, and landed safely at a distance below. This exploit, happening on a Sunday forenoon, was an aggravation of the crime.

After this my father mostly took me with him to church, where I frequently employed myself in drawing figures upon the soft, painted book-board with a pin. In doing this, no one noticed me, especially as I held down my head; and, having got the church service off, I repeated it the same as the congregation. This apparently regular behaviour was not, however, of long duration, and was broken in upon at last. Sunday after Sunday a clownish fellow had obtruded himself into our pew. I did not think this quite right, and wished to put an end to it; and this happened in a very rude way in the end. A dumb man ("Dummy, of Wylam"), a constant church-goer, had a seat in a pew before ours, where, regularly during the service, he fell fast asleep. When in that state, and sitting right before our obtruder, I reached aside, and gave "Dummy" a smart blow on the head, and instantly, as if I knew nothing of the matter, I seemed to be quite grave, and intent on looking on my prayer book, while the obtruder was putting on a broad grin. At this poor Dummy was enraged, and with a distorted countenance, he kept thumping the man on the face and head, at the same time making a hideous noise, which was heightened by the fellow's shouting, and calling him "fool," at the same time assuring him that it was I who gave the blow, and not he. To the deaf man this was a waste of words. It need not be added that the congregation was greatly disturbed, while perhaps none knew or suspected the cause except my father and my preceptor in the pulpit.

Sometimes the lads in the same class I belonged to, when we had been doing amiss, were sent to cut birch rods to whip us with. At other times we were locked into the belfry, where we often amused ourselves by drawing each other up by the bell ropes to the first floor; but one of our comrades having (by the rope slipping through the hands of those who held it), been precipitated to the ground, by which he was a good deal hurt, that mode of punishment was altogether dropped. The parson, poor man, had a troublesome time of it with one or other of us; and I remember, once in particular, of putting him into very great pain and distress of mind. After a great flood, a large piece of ice, about the size of the floor of a room, had been left in a place called "Ned's Hole," by the side of the river. This I got upon, and persuaded several others to do the same, and we then set to work with a "boat stower" to push it off shore; and, in this manner, we got some distance up the river, opposite to the parsonage garden, where our master happened to be, and saw us. I could see by his agitated motions, and his uplifted hands, that he was put into a state much easier to be felt than described. After having been guilty of misdemeanors of this kind, I did not go back to school for the remainder of the day; but waded, or otherwise crossed, the river, and sat down or amused myself among the bushes, on the water banks, until the rest of the scholars left school, when I joined them and went home. But as it would not have been safe for me to go to bed (if conscious of guilt, or if otherwise betrayed) for fear of a visit from my father, I always took up my abode for the night in the byer loft, among the hay or straw, knowing well that, when his passion subsided, I should escape a beating from his hands.

The first cause of my preceptor beginning a severe system of flogging (beside the quantum I received for mischievous acts), was for not getting off my Latin tasks. When this was not done to his mind, he, by way of punishment, gave me another still worse to do, and still longer, till at length I gave up even attempting to get through them at all, and began to stand a flogging without being much put about by it. I think (at this day) my very worthy preceptor, in following this rather indiscriminate system of severe punishments, was wrong. He often beat his own son,* a youth of an uncommonly mild, kind, and cheerful disposition, whom I felt more distressed at seeing punished than if it had been myself; for I mostly considered that I richly deserved the stripes inflicted upon me, and that he did not.

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* Christopher Gregson, of Apothecaries Hall, London. He died 181—, and was buried at Ovingham.

There was a misdemeanor for which, above all the rest, I was more severely punished, both at school and at home, than for any other fault; and that was for fighting with other boys. To put a stop to this practice, was the particular request of my mother. To her it was odious in the extreme. Her reasons I do not forget. She quoted Scripture in support of them. Therein, she said, we were directed "if we were struck on one cheek, to turn the other also," (I forget the exact words): it is a portion of Scripture I did not obey. She also maintained that the business of fighting was degrading to human nature, and put a man that practised it on a level with dogs. I am conscious that I never sought a quarrel with any one; but I found an insult very bad to bear, and generally in the most secret manner contrived "to fight it out."

When the floggings inflicted upon me had in a great measure begun to lose their effect, another mode of punishment was fallen upon; and that was, after the school hours were over, to lock me into the church, where I was kept till the dusk of the evening. This solitary confinement was very irksome to me; as I had not at that time got over a belief in ghosts and boggles, for the sight of which I was constantly upon the look out. Oppressed with fear, I peeped here and there into every corner, in dread of seeing some terrible spirit. In time, however, this abated, and I amused myself, as well as I could, in surveying the surrounding objects, and in climbing up the pillars, with the help of a rope or a handkerchief, as I used to do in getting up large trees. It happened one evening, when my master, as usual, came to let me out, that I was sitting astride upon the capital of one of the pillars, where he did not see me. He called on me, but I made no answer, and he then posted off to see if the door was fast, and having ascertained that it was, he marched along the aisles in great perturbation of mind, frequently exclaiming "God bless me!" &c., When he was gone, I slipped down, and found the choir door only bolted on the inside, so I waded the river and posted home, and slept in my old asylum the hay loft. I have frequently bitterly repented of having given a man I afterwards so highly respected through life so much pain and trouble.

I have before noticed that the first time I felt compassion for a dumb animal, was upon my having caught a hare in my arms. The next occurrence of the kind happened with a bird. I had no doubt knocked many down with stones before, but they had escaped being taken. This time, however, the little victim dropped from the tree, and I picked it up. It was alive, and looked me piteously in the face; and, as I thought, could it have spoken, it would have asked me why I had taken away its life. I felt greatly hurt at what I had done, and did not quit it all the afternoon. I turned it over and over, admiring its plumage, its feet, its bill, and every part of it.

It was a bullfinch. I did not then know its name, but I was told it was a "little Matthew Martin." This was the last bird I killed; but many, indeed, have been killed since on my account.

I had been at man-fights, dog-fights, and cock-fights, without feeling much compassion. Indeed, with the last of these exhibitions, I was more entertained at seeing the wry faces, contortions, and agitations of the clowns who surrounded the cock-pit, or circle, than I was with the cocks fighting. It was long before I felt disgusted at seeing men fight. This, however, happened at last. A travelling merchant, er respectable pedlar, —a slim-made, genteel-looking man,—had perhaps forgotten himself over a glass, and not minded what company he was in. He could not, however, be long in such society without being insulted; but, be that as it might, a fight ensued, in which the stranger was over-matched. I saw only the concluding part, and was extremely shocked; for the stranger was sitting propped up with his arms behind him, quite spent and speechless, and looked like a corpse. After sitting a short time in this helpless state, his opponent walked coolly up to him, and with a blow on the face or head laid him flat on the ground. I thought he was killed, at which I became so frantic with rage and indignation, that I believe, at the moment, if I had had a pistol at hand, I would have shot the sturdy barbarian.

In going along with my narrative, I have noticed some of the first impressions which produced a change, and left a strong effect on my mind. In some of these, the change was quick and decisive; in others of a more tardy nature; and prejudices which were early rooted were not easily removed. Among the worst, was that of a belief in ghosts, boggles, apparitions, &c. These wrought powerfully upon the fears of the great bulk of the people at that time, and, with many, these fears are not rooted out even at this day. The stories so circumstantially told respecting these phantoms and supernatural things, I listened to with the dread they inspired, and it took many an effort, and I suffered much, before it could be removed. What helped me greatly to conquer fears of that kind was my knowing that my father constantly scouted such idle, or, indeed, such pernicious tales. He would not allow me to plead fear as any excuse, when he had to send me an errand at night; and, perhaps, my being frequently alone in the dark might have the effect of enabling me greatly to rise superior to such weakness.

I have known men, both old and young, who dared to encounter almost any danger, yet *were afraid of their own shadows;* and I remember well of trying the experiment, one night, upon a servant man of my father's, who was a kind of village Cæsar, and feared not to stand the most desperate battles with others of the same cast, upon any occasion. I began by sneering at his courage, and then bet him a penny that I durst do what he dared not. All I intended to do I set about rather deliberately, and then rose to perform *my feat*, which was to walk along the dark passage to the back door, and to repeat something (rather ominous, indeed) about "Silky" and "Hedley Kow." After performing my task, I returned with apparent agitation and fear, and sat down in silence close beside him for some time, and then asked him if he durst do the like. I, however, saw, by his hesitation, that the performance by him was given up, and he only remarked that "one may soon get what one'll never cast."

At another time, in broad day light, I took it into my head to make another trial of this kind upon my father's pitmen. For this purpose I detained our cur dog, until I buckled him up in a pair of old "sods," which covered him beyond both head and tail, and set him off to the pit, knowing well that he would go straight there; for he was accustomed every day to leave the pit lodge, and go home, where he waited until he saw that dinner was ready, and then his reappearance at the pit was as good as telling my father and his servants to come home. I durst not have thus amused myself if I had not known that my father was out of the way. I set off on the inside of the hedge, keeping pace with the dog all the way up to the pit heap, near which I stopped, and peeped to see the effect that would be produced; and this was really curious. One of the men, seeing the odd appearance of something alive, with a long body, without either legs, head, or tail, moving straight forward towards him, knew not what to make of it; and, after rubbing his eyes, he ran off to his companions, who, when they had taken a peep, all set off, with speed, on their way home.

In a business of a similar kind, which happened not long after, it was my lot to be the sufferer. A few companions used to come at nights to our house to play at cards with me, and I, in turn, visited them for the same purpose. We were, however, taken to task by a bigotted old woman in the neighbourhood, who called the cards the "devil's books." She told me one night before setting off to play with my companions, as usual, that, if I looked under the table, I would see the devil; and I recollect that I several times peeped to see if he were indeed there. When we were done playing, two of the gamesters, as was customary, set me across part of the fell towards home. I was, however, much surprised at their suddenly leaving me without saying good night, or making any reply to my shouting after them, and they were soon out of sight. This was at a place called the "Sand Holes," which I then left, and was turning towards home, when, behold! to my utter amazement, I saw the devil! It was a clear moonlight night; I could not be mistaken—his horns—his great white, goggle eyes, and teeth, and tail—his whole person stood fairly before me! As I gazed, I thought the hair lifted the hat on my head. He stood, and I stood, for some time; and, I believe, if he had then come up to me, I must have dropped down. Certain it is, however, that desperation succeeded fear. I moved aside, and he did the same. I involuntarily got my "jackleg knife," and, if he had then approached me, he to a certainty would have been stabbed. I slipped off my clogs, made a start in a bending direction, and at full speed ran home. He pursued me nearly to the door, but I beat him in the race. I had always understood that any person who had seen a ghost, or evil spirit, would faint on coming into a house with a fire in it. I feared this, but I fainted none! and when my father asked me what was the matter, I told him I had seen the devil. He, perhaps without thinking, gave me a slap on the head. It was not long, however, till the following affair transpired. The man who personated the devil, when he met me, had been on his way to a "kirn supper," and was going "a guising." When my father heard the whole transaction, he wrought himself up into a great rage; and very shortly after, meeting the man, in the street at Corbridge, who had frightened me, he instantly paid him off by giving him a sound beating. When the people, who always considered my father as a remarkably peaceable man, saw him thus engaged, they expressed their surprise; but, as soon as they heard the reason for what had been done, they were also exasperated, and, I was given to understand, the man was obliged to leave the village.

The first time I took notice of any of my female school-fellows arose from a reproof I met with, and the manner it was given, from one of them. The amiable person alluded to, was Miss Betty Gregson, my preceptor's daughter, and somewhere about my own age. She kept a messet dog, and the sleek, fat, useless animal was much disliked by me as well as by some of the other boys. When it made its appearance in the churchyard, which it sometimes did, we set about frightening it; and, for this purpose, some of us met it at every gate and outlet, and stopped its retreat till it became quite distressed. The last time that this kind of sport was practised on her little dog, I happened to be the only actor. Having met with it at a little distance from its home, I had stopped it from entering the house, and had pursued it about and about, or met it at the end of every avenue, till it was put into great "bodily fear!" This behaviour towards her little favourite, was very offensive to Miss Gregson. She could endure it no longer, and she called me to account for it. I can never forget her looks upon the occasion. She no doubt intended to scold me, but the natural sweetness of her disposition soon showed itself in its true colours. She did not know how to scold; for, after some embarrassing attempts at it, and some hesitation, she put me in mind of my being related to her, and of her uniform kindness to me, and with irresistible arguments and persuasions made me see the impropriety of my conduct. With me this left its mark; for from that time forward I never plagued any of the girls at school, nor did any thing that might give them offence; nor has this impression ever been effaced from my mind, but has been there fostered through life and settled into a fixed respect and tender regard for the whole sex.

Hitherto my life at school and at home might be considered as a life of warfare, and punishments of various kinds had been inflicted upon me apparently with little effect. As a cure for my misdeeds, my worthy master, however, at length found out a better and more effectual way. He one day invited me to dine with him, and after showing me the greatest kindness, he followed this up in a friendly, plain, and open way, by remonstrating with me on the impropriety of my past conduct, the evil tendency of it, and the pain and trouble it had given him ; urging me, at the same time, in such a persuasive tone, instantly to desist from it, that I felt quite overpowered with his discourse, and fell into a flood of tears. The result was, I never dared to encounter another of these friendly meetings ; and, while I remained at his school, he never again had occasion to find fault with me.

The transactions in which I afterwards became engaged, afforded me more real enjoyment. As silent time stole away, in the varied seasons of the long-measured years, changes gradually took place in many of the erroneous notions I had formed of things. As the mind became more expanded, curiosity led me to enquire into the nature of the objects which attracted my attention. Among the first was that of birds, their nests, their eggs, and their young. These to me were long a source of great delight, and many a spring morning I watched and looked after them. I also spent many a summer evening, on my way home from school, lost in wonder in examining the works going forward among a nation of ants. The place they occupied was on the top of the "Boat Hill," near Eltringham, and the colony was the largest I had ever seen. From it their narrow roads, through the grass, radiated in various directions to a great distance. These were like as many turnpike roads, and as busily crowded as any among men, leading to or from a great fair. I have sometimes with a stick overturned their accumulated gatherings, when it was curious to observe the effect produced. The greatest bustle and confusion ensued; and yet I have observed with surprise, that next morning every thing was restored to the same order as before. I noticed that they had other enemies that broke in upon them, and which perhaps injured them more than I did; and these were the turkeys from the village, where great numbers were bred every year. As soon as the young brood were able to walk abroad, the mother led them every day to this great ant hill, were they no doubt made terrible havoc among the inhabitants and their works.*

Bees also attracted much of my attention. I could not see into the interior of their works, but I made every inquiry of those who had long kept them, and gathered, in this way, as good a knowledge of their history and economy as I could. One of my morning jobs was to sit before the hives, with a stick like a spatula, to kill the wasps as they alighted to enter and rob them. I could see the bees enter, loaded with what they had culled from every flower, but never could see them attack or repel their enemies.

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* The history and economy of these very interesting insects are, I think, not well known. They appear to manage their affairs with as much forethought and industry as mankind; but to what

I frequently amused myself in observing the murders of a large spider, which had placed its web in a corner of the little window at my bed head. Being wishful to see how it managed its affairs, I prevented the servant girl from brushing the web away. Its proceedings did not excite in me any favourable opinion. Having seen it seize every innocent fly that set foot upon its snares, I had a mind to try how it would conduct itself towards a more powerful opponent. For this purpose, I caught a wasp, which I held by its wings upon the web until its feet got entangled, when out came the hitherto unthwarted tyrant; and, after some apparent hesitation, it at length was tempted to pounce upon the obtruder. The struggle was, however, very short. I soon

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degree their reasoning and instinctive powers extend is yet a mystery. After they have spent a certain time toiling on earth, they get wings, and soar aloft into the atmosphere. What change they undergo before they assume this new character, or what becomes of them afterwards, seems doubtful.

perceived the wasp double itself up and dart its sting into the body of its enemy, which instantly retired, and never afterwards returned. This is only one experiment, but further trials of the kind might be made to come at truth.

CHAPTER III.

Cherryburn House, the place of my nativity, and which for many years my eyes beheld with cherished delight, is situated on the south side of the Tyne, in the county of Northumberland, a short distance from the river. The house, stables, &c., stand on the west side of a little dean, at the foot of which runs a burn.* The dean was embellished with a number of cherry and plumb trees, which were terminated by a garden on the north. Near the house, were two large ash trees growing from one root; and, at a little distance, stood another of the same kind. At the south end of the premises, was a spring well, overhung by a large hawthorn bush, behind which was a holly hedge; and further away was a little boggy dean, with underwood and trees of different kinds. Near the termination of this dean, towards the river, were a good many remarkably tall ash trees, and one of oak, supposed to be one of the tallest and straightest in the kingdom. On the tops of these was a rookery, the sable inhabitants of which, by their consultations and cawings, and the bustle they made when building their nests, were among the first of the feathered race to proclaim the approaching spring. The corn-fields and pastures to the eastward were surrounded with very large oak and ash trees. Indeed, at that time, the country between Wylam and Bywell was beautified with a great deal of wood, which presented the appearance of a continued forest; but these are long since stubbed up. Needy gentry care little about the beauty of a country, and part of it is now, comparatively, as bare as a mole-hill.

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* This, formerly, was supplied by a copious spring of fine water, which having found its way into some pit workings and disappeared, the burn is now only fed by day water from the fields.

To the westward, adjoining the house, lay the common or fell, which extended some few miles in length, and was of various breadths. It was mostly fine, green sward or pasturage, broken or divided, indeed, with clumps of "blossom'd whins," foxglove, fern, and some junipers, and with heather in profusion, sufficient to scent the whole air. Near the burns, which guttered its sides, were to be seen the remains of old oaks, hollowed out by Time, with alders, willows, and birch, which were often to be met with in the same state; and these seemed to me to point out the length of time that these domains had belonged to no one. On this common,—the poor man's heritage for ages past, where he kept a few sheep, or a Kyloe cow, perhaps a flock of geese, and mostly a stock of bee-hives,—it was with infinite pleasure that I long beheld the beautiful wild scenery which was there exhibited, and it is with the opposite feelings of regret that I now find all swept away.* Here and there on this common were to be seen the cottage, or rather hovel, of some labouring man, built at his own expense, and mostly with his own hands; and to this he always added a garth and a garden, upon which great pains and labour were bestowed to make both productive; and for this purpose not a bit of manure was suffered to be wasted away on the "lonnings" or public roads. These various concerns excited the attention and industry of the hardy occupants, which enabled them to prosper, and made them despise being ever numbered with the parish poor. These men, whose children were neither pampered nor spoiled, might truly be called—

"A bold peasantry, their country's pride;"

and to this day I think I see their broad shoulders and their hardy sun-burnt looks, which altogether bespoke the vigour of their constitutions.

These cottagers (at least those of them I knew) were of an honest and independent character, while at the same time they held the neighbouring gentry in the greatest estimation and respect;

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* This fell, or common, containing about 1852 acres, was divided in 1812. By this division, the poor man was rooted out, and the various mechanics of the villages deprived of all benefit of it. The neighbouring farmers who reared their young cattle, and kept as many sheep upon it as they pleased, must now pay rent for the allotments laid to their farms. The wisdom which dictated this change is questionable, but the selfish greediness of it is quite apparent.

and these, again, in return, did not over-look them, but were interested in knowing that they were happy and well. Most of these poor men, from their having little intercourse with the world, were in all their actions and behaviour truly original ; and, except reading the Bible, local histories, and old ballads, their knowledge was generally limited. And yet one of these—"Will Bewick" — from being much struck with my performances, which he called pictures, became exceedingly kind to me, and was the first person from whom I gathered a sort of general knowledge of astronomy and of the magnitude of the universe. He had, the year through, noticed the appearances of the stars and the planets, and would discourse "largely" on the subject. I think I see him yet, sitting on a mound, or seat, by the hedge of his garden, regardless of the cold, and intent upon viewing the heavenly bodies ; pointing to them with his large hands, and eagerly imparting his knowledge to me with a strong voice such as one now seldom hears. I well remember being much struck with his appearance—his stern-looking brows, high cheek bones, quick eye, and longish visage ; and at his resolution (upon another occasion) when he determined upon risking his own life to save that of another man. The latter, in the employ of my father, while at work as a pitman, had lost his way in the coal workings, and was missing for perhaps a day or two, (my father being from home), when our old neighbour, just described, who was also a pitman and knew the workings, equipped himself with everything he thought necessary for so hazardous an undertaking; and, when he was about to go down the pit shaft, I felt much distressed at seeing my mother trembling in great agitation of mind for his safety and that of his lost associate. After traversing through the old workings of the colliery for a long time,—so long, indeed, that it was feared he had also lost himself,—he found the man alive, when, with his well-known thundering voice, he called from the bottom of the shaft, "all's well," to the inexpressible joy of all who crowded the pit's mouth.

Another of our fell-side neighbours, Anthony Liddell, was a man of a very singular character, and was noticed as such by the whole neighbourhood; but a full account of him would far exceed the bounds I wish to set to my narrative. He might, indeed, be called the "village Hampden." The whole cast of his character was formed by the Bible, which he had read with attention, through and through. Acts of Parliament which appeared to him to clash with the laws laid down in it, as the Word of God, he treated with contempt. He maintained that the fowls of the air and the fish of the sea were free for all men; consequently, game laws, or laws to protect the fisheries, had no weight with him. He would not, indeed, take a salmon out of the locks on any account, but what he could catch with his "click-hook," in the river, he deemed his own. As to what he could do in shooting game, he was so inexpert, that he afforded to sportsmen many a hearty laugh at his awkwardness; for he could shoot none till he fixed a hay-fork in the ground to rest his piece upon. Indeed, the very birds themselves might, by a stretch of imagination, be supposed also to laugh at him; but his deficiencies did not deter him from traversing over the country-side as eagerly as other sportsmen, notwithstanding his want of success. Whatever he did was always done in open day; for, as he feared no man, he scorned to skulk or to do anything by stealth. The gaol had no terrors for him, for he lived better there than he did at home; and, on one occasion of his being confined, when he returned home he expressed his surprise to his neighbours, that all the time "he had not had a single hand's turn to do," and exulted not a little that the opportunity had thus been given him of again reading the Bible through. He was a great reader of history, especially those parts where wars and battles were described; and, in any meetings with his neighbours, he took the lead in discourses founded on knowledge of that kind. After the Bible, "Josephus" was his favourite author, next the "Holy Wars"—these and "Bishop Taylor's Sermons" composed his whole library; and his memory enabled him nearly to repeat whatever he had read. His deportment and behaviour were generally the reverse of anything like sauciness; but, except in ability and acquirements,—which, indeed, commanded his respect,—he treated all men as equals. When full-dressed, he wore a a rusty black coat. In other respects he was like no other person. In what king's reign his hat had been made was only to be guessed at, but the flipes of it were very large. His wig was of the large curled kind, such as was worn about the period of the revolution. His waistcoat, or doublet, was made of the skin of some animal. His buckskin breeches were black and glossy with long wear, and of the same antiquated fashion as the rest of his apparel. Thus equipt, and with his fierce look, he made a curious figure when taken before the justices of the peace; and this, together with his always—when summoned before them—undauntedly pleading his own cause, often afforded them so much amusement that it was difficult for them to keep their gravity.

Thomas Forster was a man of a different character from the last, but singular enough in his way. He was distinguished for his frugality and industry, and always showed a wish to be looked upon in a respectable light. He used to call at our house on a Sunday afternoon, for the purpose of having a bit of chat with my father and mother. He took a liking to me, and would observe that, though I was mischievous enough, yet he never could find that I was "parrentory,"—that is, impudent or saucy with any one. Besides this part of the good opinion he had formed, he must have had confidence as to my keeping any secrets he might impart to me. He kept a few sheep on the fell; but his secret and main business there was looking after his bees. He had a great number of hives placed in very hidden and curious situations. Some of them were concealed under the boundary hedge of the common, and were surrounded by a great extent of whin bushes. Other hives were sheltered under the branches of old thorns, and almost covered or overhung by brambles, woodbine, and hip briars, which, when in blossom, looked beautifully picturesque, while at the same time they served to keep the eye from viewing the treasures thus concealed beneath. Others, again, were placed in the midst of a "whin rush"—that is, a great extent of old whins, the stems of which were about the thickness of a man's arm. The entrance to these last was always by a "smout hole," or small opening, through which we crept on hands and knees to the hives, and which, on leaving, was stopped up by a bushy-topped whin. By way of taking off the attention of the "over-inquisitive" as to his stock of honey, he kept hives in his garden at home, and sold the produce of these to his neighbours; but the greater part of his stock was sold at distant parts of the country. In this way, and by his industry and good management, he became what was accounted very rich; and, as prosperity excites envy, some people, in a kind of derision (his mother being a midwife), called him "Tom Howdy."

I might swell the list of such like characters (among the unnoticed poor) as those I have described, but it would perhaps be tedious, although, I think it is to be regretted that they are not better known to some of the unthinking *great;* as it might serve to take off the hauteur, which is too often shown towards them.

Another of these uncultivated, singular characters which exhibit human nature left to the guidance of its uncontrolled will, but which, sometimes, may be found—from the force of innate natural pride—to soar above every meanness, was John Chapman. This man, though clothed in rags, was noticed for his honour and integrity; and his word was considered to be as good as one thousand pounds bond. He was one of my father's workmen,—either as a pitman, a labourer, or a sinker,—and was of so strong a constitution that he thought it no hardship, on a cold, frosty morning, to be let down to the bottom of a sinking pit, where he was to be up to the middle, or perhaps to the breast, in water, which he was to lave into buckets, to be drawn up to the top. He endured the labour of every job he undertook without grumbling or thinking it hard. His living was of the poorest kind. Bread, potatoes, and oatmeal, was the only provender he kept by him; and with milk or water he finished his repasts. When, by this mode of living, he had saved the overplus money of his wages for a month or six weeks, he then posted off to Newcastle to spend it in beer; and this he called "lowsening his skin." I was at this time located in Newcastle, and when the misguided man had spent all his money, he commonly borrowed two shillings of me to set him home again. In this irrational way of life he continued for many years. On one occasion, when changing his beer house, and taking up his quarters in another, he had made no stipulation with his new landlord as to the place where he was to sleep at night ; and, judging from his ragged appearance, he was thought unfit to be trusted as an inmate without inquiry being made into his character. I was, therefore, applied to by the landlord, whom I satisfied by assuring him that, notwithstanding the outward appearance of his singular-looking guest, he might be trusted safely even with untold gold. I further told him that the man who could sleep upon the fallen leaves in a wood wanted no bed in his house better than a wooden seat, which would be as comfortable a bed as he would wish for. Matters being now perfectly settled, he was permitted, during his rambles, to make this house his home. He had been but a short time in this asylum until he got a pretty numerous acquaintance amongst the tradesmen who frequented the house, to whom his singularity, his droll and witty stories, and his songs, afforded great entertainment. Old age, however, overtook him at last, and he was then obliged to seek parish relief. On this occasion, a neighbouring laird persuaded him that his settlement was upon Eltringham, and prevailed on him to swear to it. When he called upon the farmers there for his pittance, and they convinced him that he had sworn to what was false, he was much shocked, and never called upon them again for his pay. On being asked why he had not done so, he said, "I would sooner have my hand cut off, or be found dead on the highway through want, than claim or receive money to which I am not justly entitled." After this he wandered away from Eltringham, and took up his abode in the glass house at Bill Quay, where he did any little jobs in his power, and at the same time made himself very agreeable and often very entertaining to the workmen, who long remembered "Johnny Chapman." From this place he set off on a visit to a friend, at some distance, when he was rather unwell, and not very able to undertake the journey, and was found dead on the road between Morpeth and Newcastle.

Before taking leave of these hardy inhabitants of the fells and wastes, whose cottages were surrounded with whins and heather, I must observe that they always appeared to me, notwithstanding their apparent poverty, to enjoy health and happiness in a degree surpassing that of most other men. Their daily fare was coarse bread, potatoes, oatmeal porridge, and milk, only varied by their boiling the pot with animal food, cabbage, or other succulent vegetables, and broth, on Sundays. When tired, at night, with labour, having few cares to perplex them, they lay down and slept soundly, and arose refreshed from their hard beds early in the morning. I have always felt much pleasure in revisiting them, and, over a tankard of ale, in listening to their discourse. It was chiefly upon local biography, in which they sometimes traced the pedigree of their neighbours a long way back. With the aged men I felt much amused. From the avidity with which they gathered news, they seemed to live upon it. Several of them met every day at the lodge,* or earth-built hovel, close by my father's pit, for the purpose of being gratified in this way. The carts and wains came in all directions, and many of them from a great distance, for coals, the drivers of which imparted to them all they knew of what was going on in their several neighbourhoods. The information thus obtained was then speedily given in detail at the smith's shop at Mickley, whence it was spread over the neighbouring country. One of these old men, John Newton (the laird of the Neuk), almost every morning, while I was young, met me and my schoolfellows at or near the Haly Well (Holy Well) as we were going to Mickley School, and he seldom passed me without clapping my head, accompanied with some good wishes. Many years after this, while I lived at the Forth, Newcastle, I met a little boy, one morning coming to school there, when I clapped his head, and hoped he was a good boy. I had not long passed him, till I was rather struck with the coincident recollection of his grandfather's grandfather (above named) so long before having passed me in the same way.

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* This lodge having always a good fire kept on in it, with a bed of straw on each side, bounded by the trunks of two old trees, to answer the double purpose of bed-stocks and seats, often proved a comfortable asylum to the benighted, weary, shivering traveller wandering on the road.

To these I must add another description of men scattered about the neighbourhood, with whose histories and narratives I at that time felt greatly interested. Their minute account of the battles they had been engaged in, with the hardships they had endured, and their hairbreadth escapes, told with so much enthusiasm and exultation, imparted the same kind of feeling to me. This was long before I had reasoned myself into a detestation of war, its cruelty, its horrors, and the superlative wickedness of the authors of it. I had not pictured to my mind the thousands and tens of thousands of men in their prime being pitted against a like number of others towards whom they could have no enmity—to murder each other ! !—for what? It is foreign to my purpose to enlarge upon this subject: I must leave that to others; and there is an abundant scope to dilate upon, and to depicture, the horrors of war in their true colours. The old soldiers, above alluded to, were mostly the descendants of the Borderers, whose propensity for war might, perhaps, be innate. I think, however, that the breed is thinned, from the numbers that have been killed off in our wars. One of these—a near relative—would describe how he had had his knapsack, as well as his coat laps and the cocks of his hat, shot through and through, and yet had escaped unhurt. Others of them would give similar descriptive accounts; and, when a party of them met over their ale, it is not easy to depicture the warmth with which they greeted each other, and prided themselves on the battles they had won. One of these, during a walk, in which I fell in with him, from Newcastle to Ovingham, described the minute particulars of the battle of Minden; and how, in the absence of Lord Sackville, they shook hands the whole length of the line, vowing to stand by each other without flinching. This tall, stout man, John Cowie, though old, appeared to be in all the vigour of youth. He lived at Ovington. His associate, Ben Garlick, of Prudhoe, appeared as if his constitution had been broken down. They had served in a corps called Napier's Grenadiers. Cowie appeared occasionally in his old military coat, &c. After he died, this coat, which had been shot at at Minden and elsewhere, was at last hung up on a stake on the corn rigs as a scare-crow.

The ferocious people from whom, as I have intimated, the above individuals were probably descended, bore nearly the same names on both sides of the Border; their character seemed to have been distinct from both their English and Scottish neighbours; and war and rapine had long been their almost constant employment. Many of these—the retainers of the chieftains of old, whose feet were swift to shed blood—were called by names descriptive of their characters and persons, and which were mostly continued by their offspring. These consisted of a great variety of names of cunning or ferocious birds and beasts, as well as some others, the meaning of which is now unknown. There were among them the Hawk, Glead, Falcon, Fox, Wolf, Bloodhound, Greyhound, Raven, Crow, Gorfoot, Crowfoot, &c., &c.

The farmers of the neighbourhood, at the early period which I have been describing, always appeared to me to be not of so intelligent a cast as the poor labouring men. Their minds being more exclusively occupied with the management of their farms, they read but little. They were mostly of a kind and hospitable disposition, and well-intentioned, plain, plodding men, who went jogging on in their several occupations as their fathers had done before them.

The next advance in society were the Lairds, who lived upon their own lands. I have always, through life, been of opinion that there is no business of any kind that can be compared to that of a man who farms his own land. It appears to me that every earthly pleasure, with health, is within his reach. But numbers of these men were grossly ignorant, and in exact proportion to that ignorance they were sure to be offensively proud. This led them to attempt appearing above their station, which hastened them on to their ruin; but, indeed, this disposition and this kind of conduct invariably leads to such results. There were many of these lairds on Tyneside; as well as many who held their lands on the tenure of "suit and service," and were nearly on the same level as the lairds. Some of the latter lost their lands (not fairly I think) in a way they could not help; many of the former, by their misdirected pride and folly, were driven into towns, to slide away into nothingness, and to sink into oblivion, while their "ha' houses" (halls), that ought to have remained in their families from generation to generation, have mouldered away. I have always felt extremely grieved to see the ancient mansions of many of the country gentlemen, from somewhat similar causes, meet with a similar fate. The gentry should, in an especial manner, prove by their conduct that they are guarded against showing any symptom of foolish pride, at the same time that they soar above every meanness, and that their conduct is guided by truth, integrity, and patriotism. If they wish the people to partake with them in these good qualities, they must set them the example, without which no real respect can ever be paid to them. Gentlemen ought never to forget the respectable station they hold in society, and that they are the natural guardians of public morals, and may with propriety be considered as the head and the heart of the country, while "a bold peasantry" are, in truth, the arms, the sinews, and the strength of the same; but when these last are degraded, they soon become dispirited and mean, and often dishonest and useless.

I think the late Duke of Northumberland must have had an eye to raising the character of the peasantry when he granted them small portions of land at a reasonablet rate. If so, in my way of judging, he was an honour to the peerage, and set an example worthy of himself and worthy of imitation. By going a step further, and planting healthy, strong, men and women on these spots, his patriotism would have been crowned with immortality ; for I cannot help thinking that, if the same pains were taken in breeding mankind that gentlemen have bestowed upon the breeding of horses and dogs, human nature might, as it were, be new modelled, hereditary diseases banished, and such a race might people the country as we can form no conception of. Instead of a nation of mongrels, there would in time appear a nation of "Admirable Chrichtons." If the lands commonly attached to townships had been continued as such, and let in small portions to mechanics and labourers (as the late Duke did), instead of dividing them by act of Parliament among those who already had too much, the good effects to the community at large would have been soon felt; and, in addition to this, if savings banks and benefit societies were encouraged by every possible means, there would be little occasion for poor laws except as a provision for helpless children, and the lame and the blind. By such means as these, perhaps, this national evil might be done away. All men ought to provide for the necessities of old age, and be made sensible of the manly pleasure of being independent. It is degrading, and in most cases disgraceful, to those who look to parish assistance after a life spent in laziness and mismanagement.

I must not omit mentioning a circumstance that happened to Eltringham while I was a boy.

It was to have been called "Little Birmingham," but this was not accomplished. In 17—, a person of the name of Laidler, who was said to have amassed a large fortune in London, came to the North, and established the Iron Works at Busy Cottage, near Newcastle; and, on his taking a view of Tyneside, he fixed upon Eltringham as a place at which he could carry on works to a much greater extent. He set about this business in great haste. All kinds of workmen were gathered together for the purpose of speedily accomplishing what he had in view; and, while some of them were busy in making the mills and machinery, others were digging a mill-race of about a quarter of a mile in length But lo! when this was done, —not being permitted to encroach on the bed of the river,—it was found they had not much more than a foot of waterfall; and, as the sides of the mill-race were cut perpendicularly, about two yards deep, through the dark fine soil, the first great flood of the Tyne nearly levelled and filled it up. The people in and about the place, including my father, who had got licenses to sell ale, &c., were obliged to decline, and the sign of my father's house,—the Seven Stars,—which hung up between the two ash trees, was taken down. The projector made our house his home while the works were going on, and the men were paid their wages there. All was as suddenly sold off as it was begun, and my father came to some loss after all the trouble and turmoil he had been put to.

CHAPTER IV.

Being now nearly fourteen years of age, and a stout boy, it was thought time to set me off to business; and my father and mother had long been planning and consulting, and were greatly at a loss what it would be best to fix upon. Any place where I could see pictures, or where I thought I could have an opportunity of drawing them, was such only as I could think of. A Newcastle bookseller, whose windows were filled with prints, had applied to Mr. Gregson for a boy; and, when I was asked if I would like to go to him, I readily expressed my hearty consent; but, upon my father making enquiry respecting him, he was given to understand that he bore a very bad character: so that business was at an end. The same year—1767—during the summer, William Beilby and his brother Ralph took a ride to Bywell, to see their intimate acquaintance, Mrs. Simons, who was my godmother, and the widow of the late vicar there. She gave them a most flattering account of me; so much so, that they, along with her and her daughter, set off that same afternoon to Cherryburn to visit us, and to drink tea. When the Newcastle visitors had given an account of their enamellings, drawings, and

THOMAS BEWICK *NEWCASTLE*
was Bound October the first *1767*

engravings, with which I felt much pleased, I was asked which of them I should like to be bound to; and, liking the look and deportment of Ralph the best, I gave the preference to him. Matters bearing upon this business were slightly talked over, and my grandmother having left me twenty pounds for an apprentice fee, it was not long till a good understanding between parties took place, and I soon afterwards went to R. Beilby upon trial.

The first of October was the day fixed upon for the binding. The eventful day arrived at last, and a most grievous one it was to me. I liked my master; I liked the business; but to part from the country, and to leave all its beauties behind me, with which I had been all my life charmed in an extreme degree,—and in a way I cannot describe,—I can only say my heart was like to break; and, as we passed away, I inwardly bade farewell to the whinny wilds, to Mickley bank, to the Stob-cross hill, to the water banks, the woods, and to particular trees, and even to the large hollow old elm,* which had lain perhaps for centuries past, on the haugh near the ford we were about to pass, and which had sheltered the salmon fishers, while at work there, from many a bitter blast. We called upon my much esteemed schoolfellow, Christopher Gregson, at Ovingham, where he and his father were waiting to accompany us to Newcastle—all on the same errand—(we were both bound on that day). While we were condoling — comforting each other—I know not what to call it—at the parsonage gates, many of the old neighbours assembled at the churchyard wall, to see us set off, and to express their good wishes; and, amongst the rest, was a good, sensible old woman of the village, named Betty Kell, who gave us her blessing, and each a penny for good luck. This being done, our horses were mounted, and we commenced our journey. The parties kept at a little distance from each other. I suppose our late preceptor was lecturing his son, and my father was equally busied in the same way with me. He had always set me the example and taken every opportunity of showing how much he detested meanness, and of drawing forth every particle of pride within me, for the purpose of directing it in the right way. He continued a long while on subjects of this kind, and on the importance and inestimable value of honour and honesty; and he urgently pressed upon me to do my duty to my master, in faithfully and obediently fulfilling all his commands, to be beforehand in meeting his wishes, and, in particular, to be always upon my guard against listening to the insinuations and the wicked advice of worthless persons, who I would find ever ready to poison my ear against him. He next turned his discourse on another topic—new to me from him—of great importance—religion—and pressed this also upon me in a way I did not forget. He begged I would never omit, morning and evening, addressing myself to my Maker, and said that if I ceased to do so, then he believed and feared every evil would follow. I was greatly surprised to hear him dwell on this subject ; for I think it was the first time. He used, indeed, to go to church ; but I do not recollect his ever commenting upon the sermons he heard there, further than that, the good man's discourse from the pulpit seemed to him to be wasted upon the majority of his congregation, and of his calling some of them "holy professors." My mother, who was of a religious turn, had, indeed, all her life endeavoured to make me so too ; but, as I did not clearly understand her well-intended lectures, they made little impression. My father's pithy illustrations, as before hinted at, were much more forcibly and clearly made out : I understood them well, and they operated powerfully upon me.* I have often reflected since upon the very high importance, and the necessity, of instilling this species of education into the minds of youth ; for, were pains taken to draw forth the pride naturally implanted in their minds for the wisest and best purposes, if properly directed, it would exalt human nature, and be of the utmost importance to individuals and to society. It is the want of this education, and the want of industry, that occasions and spreads misery over the land. How can I doubt that, if my father had been a thief, I would have been one also, or, if a highwayman or robber, as expert as himself. In my opinion, there are two descriptions of persons who ought to forbear, or be prevented, from marrying—viz., those of a base, wicked, and dishonest character, and those who have broken down their constitutions and debased both mind and body by dissipation. The latter entail misery upon their innocent offspring: the children of the former, by the bad example shown to them, become a curse to the community in which they live.

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* This old tree was swept away by the great flood of the 17th November, 1771.

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* I recollect one instance where I felt the force of this species of education. I might enumerate some others, but this left its mark upon me. Having fallen in with, and joined, two untutored lads, in Prudhoe "lonning," they jumped over the hedge and filled their pockets with potatoes. The farmer was watching, but they escaped. Not having followed their example, I did not offer to fly, but he seized me, and threatened what he would do. At this I was extremely distressed, and had it not been that I consoled myself with the certainty that my father and mother would believe me, on my asserting that I had not stolen any of his potatoes, I believe I would have drowned myself.

When we arrived at Newcastle, the documents were soon made ready to bind my companion and myself. He was bound to Messrs. Doughty and Wiggins, chemists and druggists; but Mr. Beilby (perhaps from his having heard some unfavourable account of me) and my father not readily agreeing upon the exact terms of my servitude, some fears were entertained that the business between us might be broken off. On this occasion my preceptor interfered very ardently, spoke warmly in my praise, and dwelt forcibly, in particular (notwithstanding my wild, boyish behaviour at school), upon my never being saucy or sulky, nor in the least indulging in anything like revenge. In this business, Mr. Gregson was ably seconded by his relation and my kind friend, Mr. Joseph Langstaff, of Newcastle, who was also acquainted with my new master; and so the business of binding was settled at last.

My new master, who, I believe, had laid down plans for the regulation of his own conduct, began with me upon a system of rigid discipline, from which he never varied or relaxed, and it was not long before I gave occasion to his putting it in force. Having walked out on a Sunday afternoon to see the environs of the town, the first place that attracted my attention was "King Jamie's Well." There I fell in with bad company, consisting of three low blackguard 'prentice lads, from the Close. Having no wish to have anything to say to them, I endeavoured to shun their company; but they, seeing me in a strange and perhaps somewhat clownish dress, followed and insulted me; and this they persisted in till I could bear it no longer, when, turning upon one of the sauciest of them, I presently levelled him, and was about serving the second in the same way, when they all three fell upon me and showed no mercy, so that, in the end, I went home to my master's house with a scratched face and black eyes. This was an abominable sight to the family, which no excuse could palliate. After this, I was obliged to attend my master to church twice a day, every Sunday, and, at night, to read the Bible, or some other good book, to old Mrs. Beilby and her daughter, or others of the family; and this continued during the time of the term I boarded in the house with them.

The father of Mr. Beilby followed the business of a goldsmith and jeweller in Durham, where he was greatly respected. He had taken care to give all his family a good education. His eldest son, Richard, had served his apprenticeship to a die-sinker, or seal engraver, in Birmingham. His second son, William, had learned enamelling and painting in the same place. The former of these had taught my master seal-cutting, and the latter taught his brother Thomas and sister Mary enamelling and painting; and, in this way, this most respectable and industrious family lived together and maintained themselves. But, prior to this state of things, while the family were more dependant upon the industry of their father, he had failed in business, left Durham, and begun business in Gateshead, where he and his eldest son Richard died.

I have been informed that the family had to struggle with great difficulties about this period, and that, by way of helping to get through them, their mother taught a school in Gateshead. But this state of things could not have lasted long; for the industry, ingenuity, and united energies of the family must soon have enabled them to soar above every obstacle. My master had wrought as a jeweller with his father before he went to his brother Richard to learn seal-cutting, which was only for a very short time before his death. He had also assisted his brother and sister in their constant employment of enamel painting upon glass. At this time a circumstance happened which made an opening for my future master to get forward in business unopposed by any one. An engraver of the name of Jameson, who had the whole stroke of the business in Newcastle, having been detected in committing a forgery upon the old bank, he was tried for the crime. His life was saved by the perjury of a Mrs. Grey; but Jameson left the town.

For some time after I entered the business, I was employed in copying "Copeland's Ornaments;" and this was the only kind of drawing upon which I ever had a lesson given to me from any one. I was never a pupil to any drawing master, and had not even a lesson from William Beilby, or his brother Thomas, who, along with their other profession, were also drawing masters. In the later years of my apprenticeship, my master kept me so fully employed that I never had any opportunity for such a purpose, at which I felt much grieved and disappointed. The first jobs I was put to do was blocking-out the wood about the lines on the diagrams (which my master finished) for the "Ladies Diary," on which he was employed by Charles Hutton,* and etching sword blades for William and Nicholas Oley, sword manufacturers, &c., at Shotley Bridge. It was not long till the diagrams were wholly put into my hands to finish.

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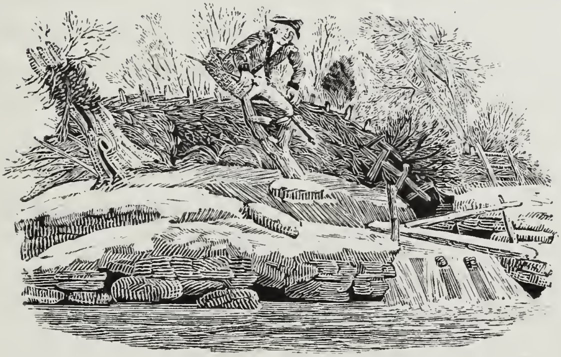
* Afterwards the great Dr. Hutton. He died 27th January, 1823, in the 86th year of his age.

After these, I was kept closely employed upon a variety of other jobs; for such was the industry of my master that he refused nothing, coarse or fine. He undertook everything, which he did in the best way he could. He fitted-up and tempered his own tools, and adapted them to every purpose, and taught me to do the same. This readiness brought him in an overflow of work, and the work-place was filled with the coarsest kind of steel stamps, pipe moulds, bottle moulds, brass clock faces, door plates, coffin plates, bookbinders letters and stamps, steel, silver, and gold seals, mourning rings, &c. He also undertook the engraving of arms, crests and cyphers, on silver, and every kind of job from the silversmiths; also engraving bills of exchange, bank notes, invoices, account heads, and cards. These last he executed as well as did most of the engravers of the time; but what he excelled in was ornamental silver engraving. In this, as far as I am able to judge, he was one of the best in the kingdom; and, I think, upon the whole, he might be called an ingenious, self-taught artist. The higher department of engraving, such as landscape or historical plates, I dare say, was hardly ever thought of by my master; at least not till I was nearly out of my apprenticeship, when he took it into his head to leave me in charge of the business at home, and to go to London for the purpose of taking lessons in etching and engraving large copper plates. There was, however, little or no employment in this way in Newcastle, and he had no opportunity of becoming clever at it; so he kept labouring on with such work as before named, in which I aided him with all my might. I think he was the best master in the world for teaching boys, for he obliged them to put their hands to every variety of work. Every job, coarse or fine, either in cutting or engraving, I did as well as I could, cheerfully; but the business of polishing copper plates, and hardening and polishing steel seals, was always irksome to me. I had wrought at such as this a long time, and at the coarser kind of engraving (such as I have noticed before), till my hands had become as hard and enlarged as those of a blacksmith. I, however, in due time, had a greater share of better and nicer work given me to execute; such as the outside and inside mottos on rings, and sometimes arms and crests on silver, and seals of various kinds, for which I made all the new steel punches and letters. We had a great deal of seal cutting, in which my master was accounted clever, and in this I did my utmost to surpass him.

While we were going on in this way, we were occasionally applied to by printers to execute wood cuts for them. In this branch my master was very defective. What he did was wretched. He did not like such jobs; on which account they were given to me; and the opportunity this afforded of drawing the designs on the wood was highly gratifying to me. It happened that one of these,—a cut of the "George and Dragon" for a bar bill,—attracted so much notice, and had so many praises bestowed upon it, that this kind of work greatly increased, and orders were received for cuts for children's books; chiefly for Thomas Saint, printer, Newcastle, and successor of John White, who had rendered himself famous for his numerous publications of histories and old ballads. With the singing of the latter, the streets of Newcastle were long greatly enlivened; and, on market days, visitors, as well as the town's people, were often highly gratified with it. What a cheerful, lively time this appeared to me and many others! This state of things, however, changed when public matters cast a surly gloom over the character of the whole country; and these singing days, instead of being regulated by the magistrates, were, in their wisdom, totally put an end to.

My time now became greatly taken up with designing and cutting a set of wood blocks for the "Story-teller," "Gay's Fables," and "Select Fables," together with cuts of a similar kind, for printers. Some of the Fable cuts were thought so well of by my master that he, in my name, sent impressions of a few of them to be laid before the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, &c., and I obtained a premium. This I received shortly after I was out of my apprenticeship, and it was left to my choice whether I would have it in a gold medal, or money, (seven guineas). I preferred the latter; and I never in my life felt greater pleasure than in presenting it to my mother. On this occasion, amongst the several congratulations of kind neighbours, those of Mr.

Gregson, my old master, stood pre-eminent. He flew from Ovingham, where the news first arrived, over to Eltringham, to congratulate my father and mother; and the feelings and overflowings of his heart can be better imagined than described.



CHAPTER V.

During the time I was an inmate in my master's house, along with his mother, brothers, and sister, I attended his brother's horse, and made myself as useful to the family as I could. At that time I had no acquaintances,—at least none to be very intimate with. I needed none. I wandered in the fields, and on the Town Moor, alone, and amused myself with my own thoughts. When the time arrived that I was to cater for myself upon four shillings and sixpence per week, I went to lodge with my aunt Blackett, who, being the widow of a freeman,* kept a cow upon the Town Moor, and I was abundantly supplied with milk, which was the chief thing I lived upon.

At Mrs. Blackett's I became acquainted with Gilbert Gray, bookbinder; and this singular and worthy man was perhaps the most invaluable acquaintance and friend I ever met with. His moral lectures and advice to me formed a most important succedaneum to those imparted by my parents. His wise remarks, his detestation of vice, his industry, and his temperance, crowned with a most lively and cheerful disposition, altogether made him appear to me as one of the best of characters. In his workshop I often spent my winter evenings. This was also the case with a number of young men, who might be considered as his pupils; many of whom, I have no doubt, he directed into the paths of truth and integrity, and who revered his memory through life. He rose early to work, lay down when he felt weary, and rose again when refreshed. His diet was of the simplest kind; and he eat when hungry, and drank when dry, without paying regard to meal times. By steadily pursuing this mode of life, he was enabled to accumulate sums of money—from ten to thirty pounds. This enabled him to get books, of an entertaining and moral tendency, printed and circulated at a cheap rate. His great object was, by every possible means, to promote honourable feelings in the minds of youth, and to prepare them for becoming good members of society. I have often discovered that he did not overlook ingenious mechanics, whose misfortunes—perhaps mismanagement—had led them to a lodging in Newgate. To these he directed his compassionate eye, and for the deserving (in his estimation), he paid their debt, and set them at liberty. He felt hurt at seeing the hands of an ingenious man tied up in prison, where they were of no use either to himself or to the community. This worthy man had been educated for a priest; but he would say to me, "of a 'trouth,' Thomas, I did not like their ways." So he gave up the thoughts of being a priest, and bent his way from Aberdeen to Edinburgh, where he engaged himself to Allan Ramsay, the poet, then a bookseller at the latter place, in whose service he was both shopman and bookbinder. From Edinburgh he came to Newcastle. Gilbert had had a liberal education bestowed upon him. He had read a great deal, and had reflected upon what he had read. This, with his retentive memory, enabled him to be a pleasant and communicative companion. I lived in habits of intimacy with him to the end of his life; and, when he died, I, with others of his friends, attended his remains to the grave at the Ballast Hills.*

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* Thomas Blackett, silversmith. He was one of my godfathers, and had been foreman to the late John Langlands, by whom he was much noticed as a man of a most intrepid spirit. He was remarkable for his honour, honesty, and punctuality.

How long I remained with my aunt, I have now forgotten. After I left her house, I went to lodge with a person named Hatfield, whose wife was an excellent cook and market woman, and who had long lived in the family of "Willy Scott," the father of the present Lord Chancellor of England. My landlord afterwards got into a very unfortunate way of doing business. Being a flax dresser, his brethren prevailed upon him and his wife to permit the tramps—or scamps—in that line to take up their lodgings with them. Here I was introduced, or at least had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with them, and a pretty set they were. Their conduct was wicked in the extreme. The proper effect, however, was produced upon me; for I looked upon their behaviour with the utmost disgust. After my landlord had for some time been cheated and defrauded by this set, he at length got done with them, and boarded and lodged others of a better cast of character.

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* He died on the 12th February, 1794, in the 86th year of his age.

Long before the death of my friend Gilbert, I had ceased to have the privilege of reading his books, and what I could save out of my wages only afforded me a scanty supply. I had, however, an opportunity, per favour of my master's servant, (who admitted me early in the morning into his parlour), of reading through, with great attention, the then new publication of "Smollett's History of England;" and, for a long time afterwards, I clearly remembered everything of note which it contained. With some of the characters therein depicted, I was greatly pleased, but with others I was shocked and disgusted. They appeared to me like fiends obtruded upon the community, as a curse and a scourge; and yet how surprising it is that some of these can be spoken of, by authors, with complacency. Another source from whence to obtain a supply of books presently fell in my way, through the kindness of William Gray, the son of Gilbert. He was a bookbinder of some repute, and this led him into employment of a superior cast to that of his father, and his workshop was often filled with works of the best authors. To these, while binding, I had ready access; for which purpose I rose early in the morning; and to him my well-known whistle in the street was the signal for his quickly preparing to get to his work, and I remained with him till my work hour came.

I feel it as a misfortune, that a bias, somehow or other, took place in my mind at this time, which led me deeply into the chaos of what is called religious works; and, for the purpose of getting into a thorough knowledge of all matters of this important kind, I spent much time, and took great pains, to obtain information; but, instead of this, I got myself into a labyrinth—bewildered with dogmas, creeds, and opinions, mostly the fanatical reveries, or the bigoted inventions, of interested or designing men, that seemed to me to be without end; and, after all my pains, I left off in a more unsettled state of mind than when I began. I may be mistaken; but I think, many a well-meaning man has spun out his life, and spent his time, on subjects of this kind in vain. Waggon loads of sermons have been published—some of them, perhaps, good—in order to prove matters (in my opinion) of no importance either to religion or morality. If it be true that every thing in perfection is simple, so it must be with religion. There may be many moral and religious duties for man to fulfil in his passage through life; but the rules for doing so are so plain and easily understood that common sense only is necessary for all that is required of us in the performance of them. The beauty and simplicity of the doctrines laid down by the inspired and benevolent Author of the Christian Religion, however they may have been distorted and disfigured, are yet in themselves perfect. They may, indeed, be compared to a mathematical point —a point of perfection for all men to aim at, but to which none can fully attain. The inspired writings of the prophets of old are also full of simplicity, as well as of indescribable beauty, and may be read and considered with ever-increasing delight. Poets and moralists, of more modern times, have also laboured most clearly to point out the paths which lead to religion, to virtue, and to happiness. As far as I am able to judge, all we can do is to commune with and reverence and adore the Creator, and to yield with humility and resignation to His will. With the most serious intention of forming a right judgment, all the conclusion I can come to is, that there is only one God and one religion ; and I know of no better way of what is called serving God than that of being good to his creatures, and of fulfilling the moral duties, as that of being good sons, brothers, husbands, fathers, and members of society.

At this time, I had few that I could call intimate acquaintances. My almost only ones were books, over which I spent my time, mornings and evenings, late and early. This too intense application to books, together with my sedentary employment, and being placed at a very low work bench, took away my healthy appearance, and I put on a more delicate look, and became poorly in health. When my master saw this, he sent for medical aid, and Nathaniel Bailes,* surgeon, was consulted. But, before he uttered a word as to my ailment, he took me to his own house, and there he stripped and examined me, and, looking me in the face, told me "I was as strong as a horse." He then made up some medicine to cause expectoration. This was all soon done, but not so the lecture he gave my master, whom he addressed in terms which I thought both long and rude. "What!" said he, "have you no more sense than to set a growing, country lad to work, doubled up at a low bench, which will inevitably destroy him?" and, in his passion, he cursed Mr. Beilby for his ignorance or something worse. From this time the Doctor took a liking to me, and often criticised my work. He also took great pains to direct me how to live and to manage myself, under so sedentary an employment ; and an intimacy commenced between us which lasted as long as he lived. He urged upon me the necessity of temperance and exercise. I then began to act upon his advice, and to live as he directed, both as to diet and exercise. I had read "Lewis Cornaro," and other books, which treated of temperance ; and I greatly valued the advice given in the "Spectator," which strongly recommended all people to have their days of abstinence. Through life I have experienced the uncommon benefit derived from occasionally pursuing this plan, which always keeps the stomach in proper tone. I regularly pursued my walks, and, whilst thus exercising, my mind was commonly engaged in devising plans for my conduct in life.

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* He was commonly called Dr. Bailes. He was a Newcastle worthy, and was accounted a man of great skill in his profession, as well as eminent for his learning and other attainments. He was ingenious and enterprising, a tolerably good engraver, and a good mechanic. He was called the "Eloquent Sword-bearer." He headed the committee of the Burgesses, in 17—, who tried and beat the magistrates of Newcastle respecting their exclusive claim to the Town Moor; and he was active in everything relative to the good of the town. He invented a harpoon for killing whales, for which he got a patent. It was of a triangular shape, or like three razors, back to back, and brought to a sharp point, and it was strongly barbed at its termination, towards the socket. By its use, lines and cords were saved. The price was three guineas, which, being deemed too high, was probably the cause of a confederacy of harpoon makers, sea-captains, and others (who knew not how to appreciate its value) to set their faces against using it. The Doctor, who did not like to be kept debating with ignorance and prejudice, and was not actuated by pecuniary motives, suffered the business to go to neglect. He died 16th July, 1791, aged 74, and was buried in St. Nicholas' Church, Newcastle.

For a long time, both in summer and winter, I went to Elswick three times a day, at the expense of a penny each time for bread and milk. I had an hour allowed me for dinner ; and, as to my mornings and evenings, I could take a much longer time. A very small matter of animal food, when I missed going to Elswick, was amply sufficient for me ; for I think my constitution did not require to be stimulated. By persevering in this system of temperance and exercise, I was astonished to find how much I improved in health, strength, and agility. I thought nothing of leaving Newcastle after I had done work—7 o'clock—on a winter's night, and of setting off to walk to Cherryburn. In this I was stimulated by an ardent desire to visit my parents as often as possible; and the desire continued to act upon me as long as they lived.

In my solitary walks (as before noticed), the first resolution made was that of living within my income; and another of similar import, was that of never getting anything upon trust; but, indeed, my limited income, at this time, led me carefully to observe these rules, and I have never since forgotten them. The train of reflections they brought along with them has also dwelt upon my mind. I could not help observing the inevitable ill consequences which a contrary course (at first entered upon, perhaps, unthinkingly) led thousands into, and the misery it entailed. The more I have thought upon this subject, the more clearly I have seen its importance. Getting into debt is followed by leading people to live beyond their incomes; and this makes all who do so, soon become demoralised and dishonest; and, when the mind has been thus blunted and degraded, anxiety and trouble must be its attendants, till vice and misery close the scene.

Amongst the acquaintances I made at the workshops of Gilbert and William Grey, was William Bulmer, afterwards rendered famous as the proprietor of the Shakespeare Printing Office, in Cleveland Row, London, who was the first that set the example, and soon led the way, to fine printing in England. He used, while he was an apprentice, to prove the cuts I had executed. In this he was countenanced by his master, John Thompson, who was himself extremely curious and eager to see wood engraving succeed; for at that time the printing of wood cuts was very imperfectly known.

About this time I commenced a most intimate acquaintance and friendship with Robert Pollard, afterwards an engraver and printseller of eminence in London. He was bound apprentice to John Kirkup, a silversmith in Newcastle ; and, from his being frequently sent to our workshop with crests, cyphers, &c., to engrave, he took a great liking to engraving, and was indefatigable in his endeavours to become master of it. In furtherance of this, we spent many of our evenings together at his father's house, which to me was a kind of home. On his master declining business, my young friend was engaged for a term of years to learn engraving with Isaac Taylor, of Holborn, London.

In my frequent visits to the workshops of Gilbert Grey, and to that of his son William, I first fell in with Thomas Spence.* He was one of the warmest philanthropists in the world. The happiness of mankind seemed with him to absorb every other consideration. He was of a cheerful disposition, warm in his attachment to his friends, and in his patriotism to his country; but he was violent against people whom he considered of an opposite character. With such he kept no bounds. For the purpose chiefly of making converts to his opinion "that property in land is everyone's right," he got a number of young men gathered together, and formed into a debating society, which was held in the evenings in his school-room, in the Broad Garth, Newcastle. One night when his favourite question was to be debated, he reckoned upon me as one of his "backers." In this, however, he was mistaken; for, notwithstanding my tacitly assenting in a certain degree to his plan,—viz., as to the probability of its succeeding in some uninhabited country or island,—I could not at all agree with him in thinking it right to upset the present state of society, by taking from people what is their own, and then launching out upon his speculations. I considered that property ought to be held sacred, and, besides, that the honestly obtaining of it was the great stimulant to industry, which kept all things in order, and society in full health and vigour. The question having been given against him without my having said a word in its defence, he became swollen with indignation, which, after

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* Afterwards famous in London as at the head of the "Spenceans." He was sent to Dorchester goal for (I believe) some of his publications, promulgating his doctrines. He taught a school at the Broad Garth, Newcastle ; afterwards writing and arithmetic in the great school at Haydon Bridge; and, lastly, he was master of St. Ann's public school, Sandgate, Newcastle. At one time he was a member of a most respectable Literary and Philosophical society in

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Newcastle, one of the rules of which required that each member should read in turn a written lecture on any subject he pleased. Spence's was, of course, on that of "Property in land," &c. These lectures were, by the rules of the society, prohibited from publication; but Spence broke the rule and was expelled in consequence.

the company was gone, he vented upon me. To reason with him was useless. He began by calling me—from my silence—"a Sir Walter Blackett;"* adding, "If I had been as stout as you are, I would have thrashed you, but there is another way in which I can do the business, and have at you." He then produced a pair of cudgels, and to work we fell. He did not know that I was a proficient in cudgel playing, and I soon found that he was very defective. After I had blackened the insides of his thighs and arms, he became quite outrageous and acted very unfairly, which obliged me to give him a severe beating.

I cut the steel punches for Spence's types, and my master struck them on the matrices for casting his newly-invented letters of the alphabet, for his "Spelling and Pronouncing Dictionary." He published, in London, many curious books in his peculiar way of spelling. Most of them, I believe, on his favourite subject of property in land being everyone's right. However mistaken he might be in his notions on this subject, I am clearly of opinion that his intentions were both sincere and honest.

The next most eccentric individual, and at the same time one of the most worthy characters,

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* Sir Walter Blackett, bart., was five times mayor of Newcastle, and represented the borough in seven Parliaments; having been fifty years a member. He died February 8th, 1777, aged 68. As an orator he made no figure in the House, and having changed his politics in his later years, he became rather unpopular. His public and private charities were on a munificent scale; for which, indeed, he was greatly distinguished.

I early became acquainted with was George Gray, son of Gilbert, and half-brother of William Gray. He was bound apprentice to a man of the name of Jones, a fruit painter. The latter, who, I believe, was accounted eminent in his profession, lived beyond his income, and departed from Newcastle. George being thus left to himself, commenced in the same way of business, and became eminent as a fruit painter; but, from his versatility of disposition, he dipped into almost every art and science, and excelled in many pursuits. He was accounted one of the best botanists and chemists in this part of the country. He was also a geologist, and was fixed upon as a leader or director to a party employed by Prince Poniatowsky, to to take a survey of the various strata of Poland; but George, being slovenly in his dress and negligent in his person, felt himself slighted, and left those who put on a more respectable appearance to profit by his superior knowledge, and to do the best they could, and he returned home. Whether it was before or after this time I have forgotten, but he visited North America, and travelled in quest of knowledge pretty far into the interior of that country. On his return he resumed his old employment, in a room never cleaned or swept, and surrounded with models, crucibles, gallipots, brushes, paints, palettes, bottles, jars, retorts, and distills, in such a chaos of confusion as no words can describe. From this *sanctum sanctorum*, he corresponded with gentlemen of science in London and other parts. Few men were better liked by private friends—as well for his knowledge as for his honesty, and the genuine simplicity of his manners.*

In addition to the various jobs already noticed as keeping my master and myself fully employed, I had others which fell exclusively to my lot to execute; and, amongst these were the mathematical works of Charles Hutton, who frequently came into the room in which I worked, to inspect what I was doing. He was always very civil, but seemed to me to be of a grave or shy deportment. He lived in habits of intimacy with my master, and used to write designs for him to engrave from, particularly for the heads of invoices or bills of parcels; and I remember that he wrote them with an ink, or preparation, which was easily transferred to the copper. This was before his appointment in the royal military academy of Woolwich, in 1773, and long before he had the well-merited title of L.L.D. added to his respected name. Dr. Hutton was that kind of man, who never forget old friends; and, some years after, when I was in partnership with my old master, he recommended us to the notice of Dr. Horsley,† who was commencing his publication of Sir Isaac Newton's works, the execution of the whole of the cuts for which devolved upon me. This transaction took place in 1778.

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* He died on the 9th December, 1819, aged 61 years, and was buried in St. John's Church-yard, Newcastle.

† Afterwards Bishop of St. Asaph.

I continued to take up my abode with Hatfield, and, the spirits being bouyant, everything pleased me. I cannot help noticing the happy time I spent there. I was also entertained with the curious characters who resorted to his house. These were mostly bird-catchers and bird-dealers, to whose narratives respecting their pursuits I listened with interest. My landlord was almost constantly busied in rearing a numerous brood of canaries, which he sold to a bird merchant, who travelled with them to Edinburgh, Glasgow, &c., for sale.

I also, at various periods of the time I remained under Hatfield's roof, got into a knowledge of the misguided ways which too many young fellows pursued; and I watched, and saw the wretched consequences of the kind of life they led. I felt grieved for them, and did all in my power to dissuade them from pursuing such a course of life. For this advice they laughed at me, and called me "the old man." It was not very long, however, till two of them sent for me to come and see them on their death beds. The die was cast, and I cannot forget their thanks to me, and the bitterness with which they reproached themselves for not listening to what I had so sincerely recommended. Such conduct as I have been alluding to appears to me to be of the very blackest die. It is amongst the most shocking of murders. It is to be regretted that the seducer and the seduced cannot be obliged to live together for life, and, while they live, be allowed to herd only with such as themselves; for they ought to be banished from the society of the modest and virtuous part of the community. I think it a great omission in parents and teachers not to make unguarded youth fully apprized of the risks they run in towns of getting acquainted with the lost and polluted women of this stamp. Nothing can be so sure a guard against this vice as that of making young men see it in its true light—to be disgusted at it. Magistrates, no doubt, have it in their power, in some degree, to lessen this great evil, by preventing abandoned women from appearing in the streets of a town; but I have often felt for magistrates on account of the great and gratuitous trouble they take, and the difficulties they must have to encounter, in their endeavours to keep the wicked within due bounds.

My last fellow-lodgers, before I was out of my apprenticeship, were John Hymers, who had been a sergeant in the Life Guards, and had retired upon his pension, and Whittaker Shadforth, a watch-maker, and also a musician. The latter was of a quite different character from those before noticed, but was wild, enthusiastic, and romantic. Among the many whims and fancies we indulged in, one of them was to learn the manual exercise. The sergeant, who had often laughed at our follies, very readily agreed to undertake this task, provided we would strictly obey the rules he prescribed to us. This we agreed to. He began with a kind of lecture on the necessity of soldiers being obedient to their officers, and standing like a brick wall without flinching; adding that he would not use his cane upon our backs, but only to put us in mind to be very attentive. This being settled, we were in the mornings to appear before him in "bare buff," that is, without our shirts and upper-clothing. This discipline was pursued steadily for some time, notwithstanding the switches he gave us on our bare backs with his rod or cane, which we bore with the utmost *sang froid.* I think the sergeant, notwithstanding the entertainment we thus afforded him, began to tire first; for he at last lay in bed while he was giving us our lessons, and at length gave the business up.

From the length of time I had known and noticed Miss Beilby, I had formed a strong attachment to her, but could not make this known to her or to any one else. I could have married her before I was done with my apprenticeship without any fears on my part, but I felt for her, and pined and fretted at so many bars being in the way of our union. One of the greatest was the supposed contempt in which I was held by the rest of the family, who, I thought, treated me with great hauteur, though I had done everything in my power to oblige them. I had, like a stable boy, waited upon their horse; and had cheerfully done everything they wanted at my hands till one of the brothers grossly affronted me in the business of the stable. This I instantly resented, and refused attendance there any more. Before I was out of my time, Miss Beilby had a paralytic stroke, which very greatly altered her look, and rendered her for some time unhappy. Long after this she went with her eldest brother into Fifeshire, where she died.

CHAPTER VI.

The first of October, 1774, arrived at last; and, for the first time in my life, I felt myself at liberty. I worked a few weeks with my old master, and then set off to spend the winter at Cherryburn. There I had plenty of work to do, chiefly from Thomas Angus, printer, Newcastle. I continued there, employed by him and others, till the summer of 1776. This was a time of great enjoyment, for the charms of the country were highly relished by me, and after so long an almost absence from it, gave even that relish a zest which I have not words to describe. I continued to execute wood cuts and other jobs, but often rambled about among my old neighbours, and became more and more attached to them, as well as to the country.

In the storms of winter, I joined the Nimrods as of old. In spring and summer, my favourite sport of angling was pretty closely followed up. About Christmas, as I had done before when a boy, I went with my father to a distance to collect the money due to him for coals. In these rounds, I had the opportunity of witnessing the kindness and hospitality of the people. The countenances of all, both high and low, beamed with cheerfulness; and this was heightened everywhere by the music of old tunes, from the well-known, exhilarating, wild notes of the Northumberland pipes, amidst the buzz occasioned by "foulpleughs" (morrice or sword dancers) from various parts of the country. This altogether left an impression on my mind which the cares of the world have never effaced from it. The gentry, the farmers, and even the working people, of that day had their Christmas home-brewed ale, made only from malt and hops. This was before the pernicious use of chemical compounds was known, or agricultural improvements had quickened the eyes of landlords, banished many small farmers, soured their countenances, and altered for the worse the characters of the larger ones that remained.

Having all my life, at home, at school, and during my apprenticeship, lived under perpetual restraints, when I thus felt myself at liberty, I became, as I suppose, like a bird which had escaped from its cage. Even angling, of which I was so fond, and of which I thought I never could tire, became rather dull when I found I could take as much of it as I pleased. While I was pursuing this sport on a hot day in June, I gave it up; and, laying down my rod awhile, I then tied it up and walked home. Having resolved to see more of the country, I requested my mother to put me up some shirts, &c., and

I told her I was going to see my uncle (her brother) in Cumberland. She soon complied with my request, amidst expressions of fear for my safety; showing the natural feelings of a good mother. After sewing three guineas in my breeches waistband, I set off that afternoon, and walked to Haydon Bridge. There I visited an old acquaintance, Thomas Spence, then a teacher in Haydon Bridge school, with whom I was a welcome guest, and stopped two days. Leave of absence from school having been given to him, I rambled with him over the neighbourhood, and visited everything worth notice. When I departed, he accompanied me on the road nearly to Haltwhistle. After this, I met with little to attract notice except Naworth Castle; and, when I left it, and was proceeding across the country, I lost my way by following paths which led only to holes that had been made by digging peats and turf, and did not reach my uncle's house at Ainstable till late in the evening. I remained at Ainstable about a week, during which time I rambled about the neighbourhood, visited my friends at Kirkoswald and elsewhere, and spent what time I could spare in fishing for trout in the Croglin.

After I had seen Armanthwaite and Penrith, I began to think of moving further abroad; and my cousin having occasion to go to Carlisle, I went with him there, where we parted. I wandered about the old city; and, in the afternoon, looked into the shop of a watchmaker, to whom I was known as having been employed, by my master, to engrave many clock faces for him, during my apprenticeship. While I was in his shop, in came a man—a kind of scamp—of the name of Graham, who asked me what road I was going? "To Scotland," I replied. "So am I," said he; "and, if you can keep foot with me, I will be glad of your company." We had no sooner set off, than I found he was a vapouring fop who was very vain of his great prowess as a pedestrian. I could soon see that he wanted to walk me off my foot; but, having been long practised in that way, he found himself mistaken, and long before we reached Longtown, he had called in at several public houses for refreshment, and invited me to do the same. I, however, was not thirsty, and not being used to drink, I sat on the seats at the doors until he came out. He kept on in this way till we reached Langholm, when he surveyed me with an attentive eye, but said nothing.

At Langholm, my landlord, who was a Cumberland man and knew my relatives there, was very kind to me; and, among many other matters concerning them, told me that my cousin who had accompanied me to Carlisle had won nine belts in his wrestling matches in that county. From Langholm, I set off to Hawick and Selkirk, and from the latter place, next morning, by Dalkeith, to Edinburgh. I had been, in this short tramp, particularly charmed with the border scenery; the roads, in places, twined about the bottoms of the hills, which were beautifully green, like velvet, spotted over with white sheep, which grazed on their sides, watched by the peaceful shepherd and his dog. I could not help depicturing in my mind the change which had taken place, and comparing it with the times of old that had passed away, and in inwardly rejoicing at the happy reverse. It is horrid to contemplate the ferocious battles of that day, between men descended from the same stock, and bearing the same names on both sides of the border, only divided from each other by a river, a rivulet, a burn, or a stripe of ground;—that they should have been, at the nod of their chieftains, called out to the wild foray by the slogan horn, or the shrill notes of the bugle; that they should have been led to meet and slaughter each other, to manure the ground with their blood, amidst the clash of arms and the thrilling music of the pipes, which helped to excite them on to close their eyes in death. These transactions, which are handed down to their descendants of the present generation in traditionary tales, and kept in remembrance by the songs and tunes of old times, serve now only as food for reflection or amusement.

On entering Edinburgh, having been recommended to the George Inn, Bristoport, I halted there; but, being quite unacquainted with the customs of living in such places, I knew not what to do, or how to conduct myself. I, however, called for a pint of beer,—and I think it was the first I ever called for in my life,—when, lo! a good-looking girl, bare-footed and bare-legged, entered with a pewter pot, almost the size of a half leg of a boot. This I thought I could not empty in a week. As I found I could not remain in this place, I sought for another, and luckily fell in with an old Newcastle acquaintance; and to her I stated my case, went with her, and felt quite at home in her house. After I had seen as much of "Auld Reekie" as I could, and been lost in admiration at the grandeur of its situation, and of its old buildings, I next day called upon Hector Gavin, an engraver, in Parliament Close. This kind man—a stranger to me—after a bit of chat about the arts, &c., threw by his tools, and was quite at my service. The warmth of his kindness I never can forget. He took me all over Edinburgh, and gave me a history and explanation of everything he thought worthy of notice. Having parted from him with his best and warmest wishes, I rose early on the next morning and walked to Glasgow. After leaving my bundle at an inn, to which I had been recommended, I took a ramble through the city. There I fell in, by chance, with an old acquaintance, and who I supposed was dead long ago. He was not like me; he could drink plenty; so that I was at no loss what to do at this inn, as I had been in Edinburgh. He called upon me next morning with a well-informed man, when they showed me everything they thought worthy of notice in Glasgow, which, though a large city, containing many handsome buildings, I was not so charmed with as I had been with Edinburgh.

From Glasgow, I set off to Dumbarton; and, on my way, took as good a survey of the country, and whatever was new to me, as I could. My landlord at Dumbarton had seen a deal of the world, either as a soldier or a gentleman's servant, and was very communicative; and I think I spent the next day with him, in walking about and viewing everything that he could think of that might please or entertain me. After leaving him, I wished much to see the printing at the cotton works, and the print fields, as they were called, on the river Leven, near Dumbarton. To these, however, I could not get admission; so I kept passing onward, up the Leven, till Smollett's monument, near the side of it, arrested my attention. There I stopped, for I had read Smollett's works, and almost adored him as an author. On the pedestal of the monument, was a long Latin inscription, which I was endeavouring to translate, but was puzzled to make out; having never looked into a Latin book since I had left school; and, for the first time, I felt mortified at not having done so. While I was thus employed, up came a "lish," clever young man, a Highlander, smartly dressed in the garb of his country. He jumped down beside me, and we together made out the translation. When this was done, on learning from me that my sole object was to see Scotland, he pressed me to accompany him to some place or other, the name of which I do not now remember. We, however, walked a long way together on the western side of

Loch Lomond, and I know I did not visit Inverary, the seat of Argyle, but stopped with my companion at a grazier's, or farmer's, house, not a long way from it.

Having made up my mind not to visit any town, or put up at any inn, I commenced my "wild-goose chase," and bent my way, in many a zig-zag direction, through the interior of part of the Highlands, by the sides of its lakes and its mountains. The beauty and serenity of the former, and the grandeur or terrific aspect of the latter, I gazed upon with wonder, and with both was charmed to ecstacy. In moving forward, I was often accompanied or directed to some farmer's or grazier's house, by the herds or drovers, whom I fell in with ; and, in some of these houses, I took up my abode, and often, by the pressing solicitations of my host or hostess, was prevailed upon to remain with them a day or two. These kind—these hospitable people—I have never forgotten. Often the mistress of the house in these remote places, never having seen any person from England, examined my dress from head to foot, and in English—which, it was easy to discover, had been imperfectly taught her —made many enquiries respecting the country from whence I came; while the herds, with their bare knees, sat listening around, very seldom knowing what we were talking about These herds, or some of the family, generally set or directed me to the house of some other distant grazier; and I met with the same kind and warm reception throughout my wanderings I had experienced at first. It sometimes happened that, by my having stopped too long on my way, in admiration of the varied prospects I met with, that I was benighted, and was obliged to take shelter under some rocky projection, or to lay myself down amongst the heather, till daylight. In my traversings and wanderings, I called in at all the houses on my way, whether situated in the beautiful little valleys, in the glens, or on the sides of heathery hills. In these places it was common to see three houses, one added to another. The first contained a young married couple with their healthy-looking children; the next, or middle one, was occupied by the father and mother, and perhaps the brothers and sisters, of this couple; and, further on, at the end, was the habitation of the old people. These places had always garths and gardens adjoining, with peat stacks and other fuel at hand for the winter; and the whole was enlivened with numbers of ducks, chickens, &c. On my getting some refreshment of whey or milk in such places as these, I always found it difficult to get payment made for anything, as it seemed to give offence; and, when I could get any money slipped into the hands of the children, I was sure to be pursued, and obliged to accept of a pocket full of bannocks and scones.

On one occasion, I was detained all day and all night at a house of this kind, in listening to the tunes of a young man of the family who played well upon the Scottish pipes. I, in turn, whistled several Tyneside tunes to him; so that we could hardly get separated. Before my departure next day, I contrived by stealth to put some money into the hands of the children. I had not got far from the house till I was pursued by a beautiful young woman, who accosted me in "badish" English, which she must have got off by heart just before she left the house, the purport of which was to urge my acceptance of the usual present. This I wished to refuse; but, with a face and neck blushed with scarlet, she pressed it upon me with such sweetness—while I thought at the same time that she invited me to return—that (I could not help it) I seized her, and smacked her lips. She then sprang away from me, with her bare legs, like a deer, and left me fixed to the spot, not knowing what to do. I was particularly struck with her whole handsome appearance. It was a compound of loveliness, health, and agility. Her hair, I think, had been flaxen or light, but was tanned to a pale brown by being exposed to the sun. This was tied behind with a riband, and dangled down her back ; and, as she bounded along, it flowed in the air. I had not seen her while I was in the house, and felt grieved because I could not hope ever to see her more.

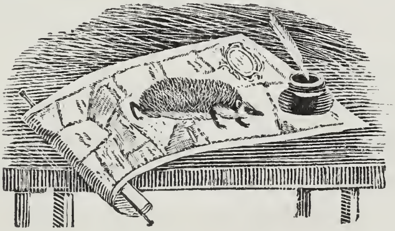
After having wandered about in this way for some time longer, during which I uniformly met with the same kind treatment among these unpolluted, unspoiled, honourable, and kind people, I began to think of the long way I had to get over on my return towards home; for, although my money was not greatly diminished among the Highlanders, yet I knew not how much I might want in or near towns, in the more *civilised* districts; so I turned back in a south-easterly direction through the country, where I met, in my various wanderings, the same warm and friendly reception. From that time to this, I have ever felt pleased at the name of Highlander. Were not these people proof against the temptation of a bribe of thirty thousand pounds, held out to them to betray the unfortunate Prince Charles Stuart. Is it not to be regretted that agricultural improvements have taught the landlords, or chieftains, to turn numerous farms into one, and to banish thousands of these hardy descendants of the ancient Britons,—these brave race of men to whose forefathers they owed so much,—to seek an asylum in foreign climes? In exchange for *men*, they have filled the country with sheep! Property, in every country, should be held sacred, but it should also have its bounds; and, in my opinion, it should be, in a certain degree, held in trust, jointly, for the benefit of its owners, and the good of society. To exercise a right of property beyond this is despotism, the offspring of misplaced aristocratic pride.

I have not noticed that I was sometimes, in passing along, detained at fairs and "trysts." These, with their merry-makings, were something like the "hoppings" and "feasts" on Tyneside; and the girls had the same ruddy look as the farmer's servants who are put to do field work in Northumberland and Durham. With the Scotch music and dancing, I was very much pleased. They were certainly good dancers, and seemed quite wild, or exhilarated to excess.

I left the Highlands with regret. The last day's journey was a very long one, and a very hungry one; after which I entered Stirling in the night. I told the landlord of the public house there that I was almost famished, not having stopped at any house on my very long journey to that place; and I begged of him to hasten to get me something to eat. He told me he had nothing left but eggs, as his company had eaten up everything that had been in the house. I did not get my eggs till midnight; for a quarrel, or an affray, happened in the house at the time I ought to have had them. They were brought in to me at last, and were boiled as hard as eggs could be. With them, in my eagerness to eat, I was nearly choked.

I remained about two or three days at Stirling, chiefly on account of my face having been so blistered by the heat of the sun that I thought it best to halt till the effects of it could be removed. My landlord was very kind. He had seen the world; and, when he found that I was an engraver, he expressed his surprise that I had not carried my tools with me; for, if I had done so, he said he had no manner of doubt, with my knowledge of heraldry, &c., that I could have found plenty of employment among the gentry and the lairds, in engraving their arms, crests, and other devices, besides being handed from chieftain to chieftain, and seeing the whole country in a very different way from that which I had, through wildernesses, so wildly pursued. On my way to Edinburgh, by Falkirk, I visited Carron Works, and passed under the canal, where, for the first time, I saw vessels afloat that had passed over my head. I was also shown the ground where the Battle of Bannockburn was fought.

As soon as I could, I made my way, by Linlithgow, to Edinburgh. I engaged a passage by sea, in a ship belonging to Whitby, which had to touch at Shields. I attended upon this vessel every tide, late and early, for several days, notwithstanding which I missed my time, and was left behind. In this emergency, I got on board a Leith sloop, bound for Newcastle, then moving from the pier. We had no sooner got down the Frith of Forth, to the open sea, than we met a heavy swell, and presently encountered a violent gale which soon tore our sails to shivers, drove us far out of sight of land, and put our crew in a great bustle and dilemma. In this small vessel, the crew and passengers amounted to twenty-six. For these latter there was no accommodation. The boat upon deck was full of the sick, covered by an old sail, and the rest were obliged to sit or lie down in any corner where they could find room. The first night was a sickly, suffocating one; and for three more nights and three days, there was little or no amendment of our situation. On board this sloop there were only two beds that were not stowed with goods; and, from my wanting rest so long before I left Edinburgh, I crept into one of them as soon as I could, but found it so low that I could not lie on my side, or easily turn over. So I could get no sleep; and, to mend the matter, I had not been long in this wretched bed till an infant was put in beside me, its mother being dismally sick in the boat upon deck; and the child fell exclusively into my charge. I nursed it as well as I could during the whole voyage; and, I think, had I not done so, it must have died. After resting a day or two at South Shields, I set off to Newcastle, where I arrived (in the assize week, I think), on the 12th of August, 1776. After my long absence, I found I had a few shillings left. On this occasion, my friends in Newcastle quizzed me not a little for having, as they termed it, begged my way through Scotland.



CHAPTER VII.

I REMAINED no longer in Newcastle than until I earned as much money as would pay my way to London. I then took my passage on board a collier bound to the great city; and, after beating about in good weather and bad weather for about three weeks, I arrived in London on the first October, 1776.

The first Cockney I met was the scullerman, who was engaged to land me and my luggage near Temple Bar. I was amused at his slang and his chatter all the way to London Bridge; and, on approaching it, he asked me if I was "a-feared;" but, not knowing what I was to be afraid of, I returned the question, at which he looked queer. We passed the gulf about which he wanted to talk, and I again asked him if he was "a-feared."

It was not long before I found out my old school-fellows, Christopher and Philip Gregson, my old companion, William Gray, then a bookbinder in Chancery Lane, and my friend, Robert Pollard. The first had provided me with a lodging, and the last—through the kindness and influence of his master, Isaac Taylor—with plenty of work. Before commencing work, I thought it best to take a ramble through the city and its environs. The first day I went alone, and saw nobody I knew. On the second day, I fell in—by chance—with Sergeant Hymers, in the Strand, who, on seeing me, seemed quite surprised. He held up both his hands—he looked—he laughed—shook me by the hand, over and over again, and seemed not to know how to be kind enough. He then took me back with him till he got dressed ; and, when this was done, he made a very handsome appearance indeed. The rest of the day he devoted wholly to my service. He first took me to the blackguard places in London. I suppose this was done with a view to corroborate the truth of the stories he had told me before, in Newcastle. After I had seen enough of these places, he took me to others better worth notice ; and, having rambled about till I had seen a good deal of the exterior as well as the interior of London—of which it would be superfluous to give an account—I sat down closely to work until I got through the wood cuts which, through Isaac Taylor's kindness, had been provided for me. I then called upon Thomas Hodgson, printer, George Court, Clerkenwell, who had also provided work for me, to meet my arrival in London, and who had impatiently waited for my assistance.* I was subsequently employed by Mr. Carnan, and by Mr. Newberry, of St. Paul's Church Yard.

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* Thomas Hodgson had served his apprenticeship as a printer to John White, Newcastle (before named); and, having taken a

Having served my time as a kind of "Jack of all trades," I felt desirous to work amongst the Cockneys, to see if I could find anything amongst them; but in this I was disappointed; for I was never permitted to see any of them at work. They, indeed, seemed desirous of seeing what I was doing, and occasionally peeped in upon me for that purpose. I thought such of them as did so were a most saucy, ignorant, and impudent set. Wherever I went, the ignorant part of the Cockneys called me "Scotchman." At this I was not offended; but, when they added other impudent remarks, I could not endure them; and this often led me into quarrels of a kind I wished to avoid, and had not been used to engage in.

It is not worth while noticing these quarrels, but only as they served to help out my dislike to London. They were only trivial compared to other matters. One of the first things that struck me, and that constantly hurt my feelings, was the seeing such a number of fine-

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liking to wood engraving, he had employed most of his time in embellishing the endless number of old ballads and histories printed at that office, with rude devices, as head-pieces to them. He was a most assiduous, careful, and recluse man. What he published in London, I cannot enumerate; but I understood he employed some Germans, as well as myself, to cut blocks for him. He also employed me to make designs for many of these cuts. When he died, he left me a legacy of five pounds. This is the only money that I have ever received that I have not wrought for.

looking women engaged in the wretched business of "street-walking." Of these I often enquired as to the cause of their becoming so lost to themselves and to the world. Their usual reply was that they had been basely seduced, and then basely betrayed. This I believed, and was grieved to think that they were thus, perhaps, prevented from becoming the best of mothers to an offspring of lovely and healthy children. I often told them so; and this ended in their tears: and, if they were in poverty, I contributed my mite to relieve them. What a pity it is that this wretchedness is not prevented. Base men treat women as if they were inferior beings, made only to be used like brutes and tyrannized over as slaves. I have always beheld such conduct towards women with abhorrence; for my conceptions of this wretched state of things are of the most soul-harrowing description. It would be extreme weakness to maintain an opinion that all women are good, and that the faults here noticed are always ascribable to the men only. This is not the case; for I am obliged to admit that there are good and bad of each sex. I have often attempted to make an estimate of their comparative numbers, in which I have felt some difficulties. Sometimes my barometer of estimation has risen to the height of ten to one in favour of the fair sex; at other times it has fluctuated, and has fallen down some degrees lower in the scale; but, with me, it is now settled, and I cannot go lower than four good women to one good man. I have often wondered how any man could look healthy, beautiful, sensible, and virtuous women in the face without considering them as the link between men and angels. For my part, I have often felt myself so overpowered with reverence in their presence that I have been almost unable to speak, and they must often have noticed my embarrassment. I could mention the names of many, but it might offend their delicacy. When a man can get such a help-mate for life, his happiness must be secured; for such a one is of inestimable value: "Her price is far above rubies."

I often spent my evenings at the "George," in Brook Street, kept by a person of the name of Darby, whose wife, a Cumberland woman, claimed a distant relationship to me. At this house, I met with some very respectable and pleasant tradesmen. While I was there one evening, a stranger to me joined us. I think he was a traveller. He had, however, been in Scotland, and had a mighty itch to speak very disrespectfully of that country, and was vociferous in attempting to entertain the company with his account of the filth and dirt he had met with in it. This I could not bear: their kindness was fresh in my memory; and I felt resentment rising in me. I, however, quashed that feeling, and only told him that I believed I had travelled on foot, perhaps, about three hundred miles through Scotland, and had met with no such people there, nor such dirtiness as he described. There might, indeed, be some such in every country for aught I knew; but I was confident such might be found without going much beyond the street we were in, and who, in addition to their filthiness, were also the most wretched and abandoned of the human race. Some of them, indeed, appeared to me to be scarcely human. I concluded by observing that I was afraid he had been keeping very bad company in Scotland. A laugh by this was raised against him, and he felt him himself quashed by his own folly.

I very frequently visited Westminster Abbey, on some part of the Sunday; and, on the forenoons of that day, I mostly went with my friend Pollard to hear the Rev. — Harrison, at St. Andrew's Church, Holborn. I sometimes, also, went to hear eminent preachers at other places. I was once invited by my friend William Watson, of the Treasury, who had married the eldest Miss Beilby, to go with him to hear the Rev. Dr. Dodd preach at the Magdalen Chapel. Whether this was at the time he was arrested for forgery I am not certain, but I know I did not see him. I also went with Mr. Watson to hear the Rev. — Maxwell, another eminent divine; but, indeed, I believe I did not miss hearing any of the popular preachers in London.

For many years after I left London, I went to hear the preachers of various persuasions, and attempted to find out the general character of their several congregations. Having been brought up under the creeds and doctrines of the Church of England, I may, perhaps, have some partialities about me respecting that church, but I have ever considered that its clergy are the most learned of any, and that, excepting some of the higher orders of them, they, as well as their hearers, are the most tolerant. I have always felt grieved that a great number of them should consist of very learned and good men with curacies or poor livings that do not afford them a much better income than the wages of common mechanics; and that, however great their abilities may be, it is only by patronage that they can be advanced, while enormous stipends are lavished upon others, very often for the most useless, or, perhaps, the most corrupt purposes. I think it would be much better if the incomes of the clergy could be equalized; for, so long as matters are managed otherwise, so long will it be considered as a system of revenue of which religion is only the pretext.

But it is unnecessary here to dwell on these opinions of mine. Every man should be welcome to follow his own opinions on the all-important subject of religion. If these are founded in truth, there can be no fear of their being injured by unreserved discussion. Whatever the creed may be, there can be no objection to the religion of a virtuous man; and it is to be hoped that the distinctions and bickerings amongst different denominations of Christians will cease, and the causes of them be thought of no more importance than whether a man uses his quid of tobacco in the right cheek or in the left.

After this digression, I must now turn my attention again to London. My friend Mr. Watson was very desirous to get me work with Mr. Pingo, in the Mint; and, from his being so well-known and respected by the gentlemen in most of the government offices, he thought this might be easily accomplished. My mind was, however, bent quite another way, and no more was done for me in that business. The constant attention and kindness of my London friends, whose company I enjoyed, was unabated. They walked with me everywhere, and the house of William Gray was a home to me. I met other Newcastle friends, everp Monday night, at the "Hole-in-the-Wall," Fleet Street, where I went to see the Newcastle newspapers. Some of these occasionally wanted assistance, and got my last sixpence. At this time I earned a deal of money; and, from my habits of temperance, I spent little for my own living, and thus discovered what a small sum was sufficient to make me independent, and I never lost sight of the inestimable value of being so. I, however, never had a surplus of cash long in my possession; for one or another had occasion for it, and I could not bear to see distress without relieving it.

Notwithstanding my being so situated amongst my friends, and being so much gratified in seeing such a variety of excellent performances in every art and science,—painting, statuary, engraving, carving, &c.,—yet I did not like London. It appeared to me to be a world of itself, where everything in the extreme might at once be seen: extreme riches, extreme poverty, extreme grandeur, and extreme wretchedness—all of which were such as I had not contemplated before. Perhaps I might, indeed, take too full a view of London on its gloomy side. I could not help it. I tired of it, and determined to return home. The country of my old friends—the manners of the people of that day—the scenery of Tyneside—seemed altogether to form a paradise for me, and I longed to see it again. While I was thus turning these matters over in my mind, my warm friend and patron, Isaac Taylor, waited upon me: and, on my telling him I was going to Newcastle, he enquired how long it would be before I returned. "Never," was my reply; at which he seemed both surprised and displeased. He then warmly remonstrated with me upon this impropriety of my conduct, told me of the prospects before me, and, amongst many other matters, that of his having engaged me to draw in the Duke of Richmond's Gallery; and he strenuously urged me to change my mind. I told him that no temptation of gain, of honour, or of anything else, however great, could ever have any weight with me; and that I would even enlist for a soldier, or go and herd sheep at five shillings per week, as long as I lived, rather than be tied to live in London. I told him how sensible I was of his uncommon kindness to me, and thanked him for it. My kind friend left me in the pet, and I never saw him more. He afterwards, when an old man, visited Newcastle, but left it again without my knowing it till after he was gone. At this I felt much grieved and disappointed. I do not remember how long he lived after this; but a memoir of him was published in the "Analytical Magazine" at the time, together with a letter I had written to him sometime before his death, which he never answered. He was, in his day, accounted the best engraver of embellishments for books, most of which he designed himself. The frontispiece to the first edition of "Cunningham's Poems" was one of his early productions; and at that time my friend Pollard and myself thought it was the best thing that ever was done.*

The same kind persuasions were urged upon me by Mr. Hodgson, to remain in London, as had been used by Mr. Taylor, which ended in a similar way. The former, however, went further, and told me that, if I were determined upon leaving London, and would continue to work for him in Newcastle, he would furnish me with plenty of it; and that he would begin by giving me as much as would keep me employed for two years. This was particularly pleasing to me, because I could not bear the thoughts of beginning business in Newcastle in opposition to my old master, for whom I had the greatest respect.

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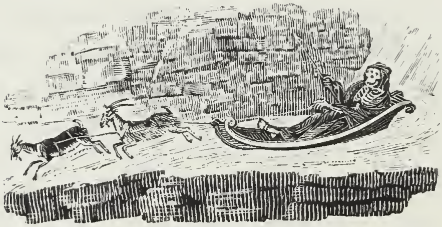
* John Cunningham, the pastoral poet, died September, 1773, aged 43 years, and was buried in St. John's Church Yard, Newcastle.

Having spent the evening till a late hour with my friends at the "George," in Brook Street, and in the morning taken leave of my landlord and landlady, Mr. and Mrs. Kendal, and their family, in Wharton's Court, Holborn, I then posted off to the Pool, and got on board a collier; and, after a very short passage, arrived in sight of St. Nicholas' Church steeple, about the 22nd June, 1777.



CHAPTER VIII.

The first thing after my arrival in Newcastle was to see my old master, and the next to engage my old lodgings at Hatfields, and to fit up a work bench there. I then set to work upon my wood cuts. This, however, was interrupted by other jobs; and the first of the kind was that of engraving a copper plate of the "Theban Harp," for the Rev. James Murray, for some of his publications.* Some of the silversmiths also began to press their jobs upon me. I had not, however, been long at work for myself till proposals were made to me to join in partnership with my late master; and this was brought about by a mutual friend (?) This proposal—which was to set me down at once in a well-established business—I did not relish so warmly as our *mutual friend* expected. I had formed a plan of working alone, without apprentices, or being interrupted by any one; and I am not certain, at this day, whether I would not have been happier in doing so than in the way I was led to pursue. I had often, in my lonely walks, debated this business over in my mind; but, whether it would have been for the better or the worse, I can now only conjecture. I tried the one plan, and not the other: perhaps each might have had advantages and disadvantages. I should not have experienced the envy and ingratitude of some of my pupils, neither should I, on the contrary, have felt the pride and the pleasure I derived from so many of them having received medals or premiums from the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, and taken the lead, as engravers on wood, in the Metropolis. Notwithstanding this pride and this pleasure, I am inclined to think I should have had—balancing the good against the bad—more pleasure in working alone for myself.

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* The Rev. James Murray, a Church of Scotland minister, with whom I had been long acquainted. He was accounted one of the best Hebrew scholars of his day. His "Sermons to Asses" attracted much notice, and so did many of his other works. He was a keen, satirical writer, and, amongst his friends, he was of a lively, witty, and pleasant temper, and greatly valued by a numerous acquaintance for his humanity and good sense. He died in January, 1782, aged 50 years, and was buried in St. Andrew's Church Yard, Newcastle.

During my absence in London, Mr. Beilby had taken an apprentice with a premium; and, to make us equal, I took my brother John as mine. With him I was extremely happy. He was constantly cheerful, lively, and very active, and my friends were his friends. Mr. Beilby was as well pleased with him as I could possibly be; for, besides his affable temper, he took every kind of work in hand so pleasantly, and so very soon learned to execute it well, that he could not miss giving satisfaction. This he continued to do as long as he was with us; but other parts of his conduct, when he arrived at manhood, was not so well, and gave me great uneasiness; for he got acquainted with companions whom I thought badly of, and my remonstrances respecting them proved in vain. He would not, as he called it, be dictated to by me; but this I persisted in till it made us often quarrel, which was distressing to me, for my regard for him was too deeply rooted ever to think of suffering him to tread in the paths which led to ruin, without endeavouring to prevent it. To the latest day of his life, he repented of having turned a deaf ear to my advice; and as bitterly and sincerely did he acknowledge the slighted obligations he owed me. He *rued;* and that is as painful a word as any in the English language.

As soon as I thought my brother might be able to work his way in the world,—he having been, I think, about five years with me,—I gave him his liberty, and he set off to London, where, being freed from his former associates, his conduct was all that could be desired, and he was highly respected and esteemed. He was as industrious in London as he had been with us, and had plenty of work to do. He was almost entirely employed by the publishers and booksellers in designing and cutting an endless variety of blocks for them. He was extremely quick at his work, and did it at a very low rate. His too close confinement, however, impaired his health. He revisited Cherryburn, where he did not remain long till he thought himself quite recovered, and he then returned to London, where he continued a few years longer, and where the same kind of confinement affected his health as before. A similar visit to his native air was found necessary; his health was again restored to him; and again he returned to London. He, however, found that he could not pursue the same kind of close confinement, on which account he engaged to teach drawing at the Hornsey Academy, then kept by Mr. Nathaniel Norton, which obliged him to keep a pony to ride backwards and forwards; thus dividing his time between his work-office in London and the school for some years, when his health began again to decline, and he finally left London early in the summer of 1795, and returned once more to the banks of the Tyne. Here he intended to follow the wood engraving for his London friends, and particularly for Wm. Bulmer, for whom he was engaged to execute a number of blocks for the "Fabliaux" or "Tales of Le Grand," and for "Somerville's Chace." Many of the former he had, I believe, finished in London, and had sketched others on the blocks, which he finished at Cherryburn. He had also sketched the designs on the blocks for the "Chace;" and to these I put the finishing hand, after his decease, which happened on the

5th of December, 1795, aged 35 years. The last thing I could do for him was putting up a stone to his memory at the west end of Ovingham Church, where I hope, when my "glass is run out," to be laid down beside him.

While my brother was my apprentice, he frequently accompanied me on my weekly visits to Cherryburn. He was then a clever, springy youth, and our bounding along together was often compared to the scamperings of a pair of wild colts. These journeys commenced while I was an apprentice. I then mostly went and returned on the same day; but, when I became my own master, for many years—in summer's heat and winter's freezing cold—I did not miss a single week. When I was an apprentice, I had a few holydays at Easter and Whitsuntide allowed me, according to promise; and these were wholly employed in angling; but, after the time came when I might do as I pleased, I mostly stopped, when the weather suited, in spring and summer, and spent the Mondays in various streams, at this my favourite—and, indeed, only—diversion. In this I was accompanied by my cheerful associate, "Jack Roe," with his flies and his tackle; and, when we had got a sufficient number, I returned to Newcastle with my creel well filled with fish, which I divided amongst my friends. With an account of these hungry, stream-wading ramblings, and the days spent in angling, and with a description of the beautiful scenery of water-sides, and the renovating charms which these altogether inspired, a volume might be filled, in imitation of the patriarch of anglers, Izaac Walton: as might also one of a descriptive or sentimental journal of these my weekly visits to my parents. These visits continued regularly from 1777 till 1785, in which year my mother, my eldest sister, and my father, all died.

It will readily be believed that, if I had not felt uncommon pleasure in these journeys, I would not have persisted in them; nor in facing the snow storms, the floods, and the dark nights of so many winters. This, to some, appeared like insanity, but my stimulant, as well as my reward, was in seeing my father and mother in their happy home. I always reflected that this would have an end, and that the time would come when I should have no feelings of warm regard called up on their account. Besides these gratifications, I felt others in observing the weekly changes of the long-lengthened and varied year, which, by being so measured out, appeared like living double one's time. The "Seasons," by the inimitable Thomson, had charmed me greatly; but, viewing nature thus experimentally, pleased me much more. To be placed in the midst of a wood in the night, in whirlwinds of snow, while the tempest howled above my head, was sublimity itself, and drew forth aspirations to Omnipotence such as had not warmed my imagination so highly before; but, indeed, without being supported by ecstacies of this kind, the spirits, beset as they were, would have flagged, and I should have sunk down.

As soon as the days began to lengthen, and the sprouting herbage had covered the ground, I often stopped with delight by the sides of woods, to admire the dangling woodbine and roses, and the grasses powdered or spangled with pearly drops of dew ; and also, week after week, the continued succession of plants and wild flowers. The primrose, the wild hyacinth, the harebell, the daisy, the cowslip, &c.,—these, altogether, I thought no painter ever could imitate. I had not, at that time, ever heard the name of the great and good Linnæus, and knew plants only by their common English names. While admiring these beautifully-enamelled spots on my way, I was also charmed with the equally beautiful little songsters, which were constantly pouring out their various notes to proclaim the spring. While this exhilarating season glided on by imperceptible degrees, unfolding its blossoms till they faded into summer, and as the days lengthened, my hours of rising became more and more early. I have often thought, that not one half of mankind knew anything of the beauty, the serenity, and the stillness of the summer mornings in the country, nor have ever witnessed the rising sun's shining forth upon the new day.

I had often listened with great pleasure and attention to my father's description of the morning, with his remarks upon the various wild quadrupeds and the strange birds he had seen or heard in these still hours throughout the year ; for he left his bed very early in summer, and seldom later than four or five o'clock in the winter. The autumn I viewed as the most interesting season, and, in its appearance, the most beautiful. It is then that the yellow harvest of the fields, and the produce of the orchards, are gathered in, as the reward of the labours of the year; while the picturesque beauties and varying foliage of the fading woods, with their falling leaves, and the assembling in flocks of the small birds, put me in mind of the gloomy months with which the year is closed.

This is the short account of many years of uninterrupted health, bouyant spirits, and of great happiness to me. I had begun betimes, and by degrees, to habituate myself to temperance and exercise, which hardened the constitution to such a pitch that neither wet nor cold had any bad effect upon me. On setting out upon my weekly pedestrian "flights" up the Tyne, I never looked out to see whether it was a good day or a bad one; the worst that ever fell from the skies never deterred me from undertaking my journey. On setting out, I always waded through the first pool I met with, and had sometimes the river to wade at the far end. I never changed my clothes, however they might be soaked with wet, or stiffened by the frost, on my returning home at night, till I went to bed. I had inured myself to this hardship, by always sleeping with my windows open, by which a thorough air, as well as the snow, blew through my room. In this way, I lay down, rolled in a blanket, upon a mattrass as hard as I could make it. Notwithstanding this mode of treating myself, I never had any ailment, even in the shape of a cold, while I continued to live in this way; nor did I experience any difference until, when I married, I was obliged to alter my plans, and to live and behave like other folks. If persons brought up and habituated to the tender indulgences common in the world, and not trained by degrees to bear the mode of life I have been describing, were to try it, unprepared, the experiment would be at their peril. My travelling expenses for the day, were commonly only a penny or twopence for crossing the water. On the hottest day, I was never made violently to perspire, but only felt a dampness on my brow. I carried no useless weight of fat about me, and the muscular parts were as hard as it was possible to be on any human being. On being asked by a gentleman—an acquaintance whom I met at Ovingham—what I got to drink on such hot days, on my road, my reply was—"Nothing." He had not been used to such doings himself; and was surprised, and could hardly believe me. He earnestly persuaded me to try the experiment of the amazing good a glass of brandy and water would do me in hot weather. This I took no notice of for some time: at length, however, on a thundery, hot day, on being scorched with heat, and in danger of being struck with lightning, which darted from a sky almost as black as ink, I stepped into a public house, and, for the first time in my life, called for a glass of brandy and water. I was then about 28 years old.

This would not be worth noticing, but only on account of its being a beginning to me, and which I did not, when occasion pressed me, leave off for some years afterwards.

This life of rapturous enjoyment has its acids, and at length comes to an end; and so did my walks, and my reflections, or contemplations, which passed through the mind while engaged in them. These, at the time, were mostly communicated to a moralising, sensible, and religious friend, who waited my return on the Sunday evenings, when, over our supper, he, in return, detailed to me the import of the sermons he had heard through the day.

CHAPTER IX.

In Christmas week, 1784, while I was amusing myself with sliding on the ice at Ovingham, which was as smooth almost as a looking glass, between Eltringham and that place,—I know not what came over my mind, but something ominous haunted it, of a gloomy change impending over the family. At this I was surprised, for I had never before felt any such sensation, and presently scouted it as some whim of the imagination. The day was to be one of cheerfulness; for Mr. and Mrs. Storey—distant relations of my father's, and for whom my parents had the greatest regard—had been, with other friends, invited to dine with us at Cherryburn. At dinner all was kindness and cheerfulness, and my father was, as usual, full of his jokes, and telling some of his facetious stories and anecdotes. For two, or perhaps three Sundays after this, I was prevented from getting over the water, by the ice and other floods, and returned from Ovingham without seeing or hearing how all were at home. The Sunday after, upon my making my usual call at the gardener's in Ovingham,—

where, when at school, we always left our dinner poke, and dined,—he informed me, with looks of grief, that my mother was very unwell. I posted off, in haste, across the river, to see her. Upon my asking her, earnestly, how she was, she took me apart, and told me it was nearly all over with her; and she described to me how she had got her death. She had been called up, on a severe frosty night, to see a young woman in the hamlet below, who was taken ill; and, thinking the bog she had to pass through, might be frozen hard enough to bear her, she "slumped" deep into it, and, before she had waded through it, she got very wet and a "perishment" of cold; and, in that state, she went to give her advice as to what was best to be done with her patient. I employed my friend, Dr. Bailes, to visit her; and I ran up from Newcastle two or three times a week with his medicines for her; but all would not do: she died on the 20th February, 1785, aged 58 years. She was possessed of great innate powers of mind, which had been cultivated by a good education, as well as by her own endeavours. For these, and for her benevolent, humane, disposition, and good sense, she was greatly respected, and, indeed, revered by the whole neighbourhood. My eldest sister, who was down from London on a visit to her home, at the time of my mother's illness and death, by her over-exertion and anxiety, brought on an illness; and, for the convenience of medical aid, and better nursing, I brought her to my hitherto little happy cot, at the Forth, where she died on the 24th June, 1785, aged 30 years. These were gloomy days to me! Some short time before my sister died, upon her requesting me, and my promising her, that I would see her buried at Ovingham, she proposed to sing me a song. I thought this very strange, and felt both sorrow and surprise at it; but she smiled at me, and began her song of "All Things have but a Time." I had heard the old song before, and thought pretty well of it; but her's was a later and a very much better version of it.

During this time I observed a great change in the looks and deportment of my father. He had, what is called, "never held up his head" since the death of my mother; and, upon my anxiously pressing him to tell me what ailed him, he said he had felt as if he were shot through from the breast to the shoulders with a great pain that hindered him from breathing freely. Upon my mentioning medical assistance, he rejected it, and told me, if I sent him any drugs, I might depend upon it he would throw them all behind the fire. He wandered about all summer alone, with a kind of serious look, and took no pleasure in anything, till near the 15th November, which, I understand, was his birthday, and on which he completed his 70th year, and on that day he died. He was buried beside my mother and sister at Ovingham. After this, I left off my walks to Cherryburn; the main attractions to it were gone; and it became a place the thoughts of which now raked up sorrowful reflections in my mind. Some particulars respecting my father, and illustrative of his character, may, perhaps, be thought not uninteresting. I shall give a few of such as I recollect them. In his person, he was a stout, square-made, strong, and active man, and through life was a pattern of health. I was told by some of my aunts, who were older than he, that he was never ill from a disease in his life; and I have heard him say "he wondered how folks felt when they were ill." He was of a cheerful temper, and he possesed an uncommon vein of humour and a fund of anecdote. He was much noticed by the gentlemen and others of the neighbourhood for these qualities, as well as for his integrity. He had, however, some traits that might be deemed singular, and not in order. He never would prosecute any one for theft; he hated going to law, but he took it at his own hand, and now and then gave thieves a severe beating, and sometimes otherwise punished them in a singular and whimsical way. I have known him, on a winter night, rise suddenly up from his seat, and, with a stick in his hand, set off to the colliery, in order to catch the depredators whom he might detect stealing his coals. I remember one instance of his thus catching a young fellow, a farmer, with his loaded cart, and of his giving him a severe beating, or, what was called, a "hideing," and of his making him leave his booty and go home empty. The thieves themselves were sure to keep the business secret, and he himself never spoke of it beyond his own fireside. In these robberies, which he saw with his own eyes, he conceived he did not need the help of either witnesses, judge, or jury, nor the occasion to employ any attorney to empty his pockets. I have sometimes heard him make remarks upon people whom he knew to be hypocrites, and on their loud praying and holding up their hands at church. After having noticed that one of these, one Sunday, had acted thus, and remained to take the Sacrament, some person called, in the afternoon, with the news that this very man had, on his way home, caught a poor man's galloway, which had entered through a gap in the hedge into his field, and had driven it before him into the pinfold. This was sufficient ; this was the spark which kindled up and increased to a blaze, which my father could not muster temper enough to keep down. Next morning, he set off to the smith's shop, and sent for this choleric, purse-proud man, to whom, in rude terms, he opened out upon his hypocrisy, and at length obliged him to release the galloway from its hungry imprisonment. He recommended him to make his peace with the poor but honest and respected man, and to go no more to church, nor to take the Sacrament, till a change had taken place in his mind. He also told him that he ought that very night, before he slept, to sit down on his bare knees, and implore forgiveness of the God he had offended.

The last transaction I shall mention, on this subject,—and which bore a more serious complexion than the foregoing,—happened when I was an apprentice. A pitman, George Parkin, who had long wrought in the colliery, was highly valued by my father for his industry, sobriety, and honesty. He would not do anything unfairly himself in working the coal in the boards, nor suffer others to do so. For this conduct he became deservedly a great favourite,—so much so that one of the old lodges had been comfortably fitted up for him and his family to live in rent free; and a garth, besides, was taken off the common for his use. For these he often expressed himself so highly pleased that he used to say, he was happier than a prince. My father, for many years, had made it a point to let the men down to their work himself; so that he might see with his own eyes that all was safe. All passed on pleasantly in this way for a long while, till one morning, when thus employed letting the men down, George, who was always the first at his work, having fixed himself on the chain, with his son on his arm, to be both let down together, had given the signal, "Wise-away," and at the same time holding up his "low rope," he observed the pit rope which was to bear their weight had been cut near the chain. On this he shouted "Stop," and started back upon the "seddle boards," just in time to prevent himself and the boy from being precipitated to the bottom of the pit. The poor man was almost overpowered with the shock, when my father, keeping the "dreg" upon the "start," caught hold of him and the boy, and conducted both into the lodge. On examining the rope, my father found it had been cut through to the last strand. He then stopped the working of the pit for that day. George, in great distress of mind, set off to Newcastle to inform me of what had happened. I was grieved to hear his tale ; and this was heightened by his declaring that all his pleasures were at an end ; for he never could go back to his work, nor to his happy home again.

For some time, my father seemed lost in pondering over this mysterious affair. He, however, at length began to be fixed in his suspicions, and, as was usual on such occasions, his indignation, step by step, rose to the greatest height. In this state of mind, he set off unusually soon in the morning, to let the men down to their work ; knowing that the object of his suspicions, —a wicked, ignorant, young fellow—would be the first, and alone. He began by accusing him of the horrid deed, and instantly to beat and overpower him ; threatening him that he would drag him to the pit, and throw him down the shaft, if he did not confess. The threat succeeded ; he was afraid of his life, and confessed. My father instantly dismissed him from his employment. When the rest of the men came to their work, they saw, by the blood, and the retaliating blows on my father's face, that something unusual had occurred. He then told them the particulars, at which they greatly rejoiced. In this state of things, the *accusing culprit*, while he bore the marks of violence upon him, set crippling off to lodge his complaint to the justices, and my father was summoned to appear before them. When met together, the justices (Captains Smith and Bainbridge,* of the Riding), heard the charge of assault, which, from the first appearance of the complainant before them, they had no reason to doubt. They both expressed their surprise to find such a charge against my father, with whom they had been in habits of neighbourly intimacy, and who was the last man on earth they could suspect as capable of committing such an outrage. After laying down the law in such cases, they wished to hear what he had to say for himself. He readily acknowledged what he had done, and his reasons for doing so. They seemed much shocked at the horrid narrative; and, after conferring together in private a short time, the business was resumed. "Pray," said one of them to the culprit, "were not you the man who robbed Bywell Lock, and"—looking him sternly in the face—"was not this master of yours the very friend by whose unceasing endeavours and influence you were saved from transportation? Begone! leave the country, and never let us see you more." The man left the country for many years, and, on his return, I was both pleased and surprised to find he was much reformed. In addition to this long account, I must add, that my father could not be troubled to harbour ill-will in his mind, and that, if he were passionate, he was equally compassionate.

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* Now Major Bainbridge, who has been many years in the commission of the peace, in which he is much respected as a magistrate and a man. Without knowing what side he took in politics, I have always considered him as a local patriot, keen of promoting everything for the benefit of Tyneside. While I am writing this (23rd June, 1823) he is living, and in his 87th year. Captain Smith I did not know. Major Bainbridge died 6th December, 1826, in his 91st year.

CHAPTER X.

For many years, including a part of those of my apprenticeship, my master and self were fully employed upon such work as I have named before, from silversmiths, watchmakers, and hardwaremen; but a new customer (Isaac Hymen, a Jew), came in the way with his seal-cutting orders, which amounted to more, in that way, than all the rest put together. This man, besides his box of watches, trinkets, &c., had gathered together a large collection of impressions of well-cut seals; and, being a man of good address, and a good singer, had introduced himself into coffee-rooms frequented by gentlemen and respectable tradesmen, where he exhibited his impressions as the work of his own hands; and, by this management—for he knew nothing whatever of engraving—he got orders. Somehow or other, it was propagated throughout the town that his seals surpassed by far anything we ever did, or could do; and, although we had done the whole of his orders, this was believed, and there seemed to be only one opinion as to his very superior excellence. I remember once rising early in the morning, and working till late at night, and, on that day, cutting five steel seals with cyphers and initials, for which our common wholesale charge was 3s. 6d., and to our private customers, 5s. For these he charged 12s. 6d. each to his friends. He observed to me, on my remarking to him on his extravagant charges, "that it was foolish in us to do as we did;" and, for himself, he said, "you know, I must live." My wages for the short time I worked for my master, after I was out of my apprenticeship, was a guinea per week, but Isaac offered me two guineas if I would travel with him. The travelling part I should have liked well enough, but not to travel with a Jew. He went on in this way, with his orders, till we had no other customer in that department; and my master then, as well as when I became his partner, often expressed himself highly chagrined that some of his old private friends went past him, and even joined others in lessening our work. Our friend Isaac continued long uninterruptedly thus to carry all before him, till some of our old customers became irritated at him, and particularly a watchmaker, who took great pains to open out and expose the business. Isaac then left Newcastle, and report said he was found dead on the road between Sunderland and Durham. I have often seen, in London,—and perhaps the same may be observed in every large town,—"The pale artist ply his sickly trade," to keep in affluence such managing, money-making, pretended artists as Isaac Hymen ; and this must continue to be the case so long as gentlemen will not go themselves to the fountain head, and be at the pains to encourage merit.

Our main supporter in the silver engraving, was John Langlands, who was of a cheerful, hospitable, and charitable disposition, full of stories and anecdotes, and who greatly esteemed men of ability, integrity, and industry. These he never forgot when age or infirmities brought them down. He then shook hands with them as he had done before, but his own mostly concealed his token of respect —a half guinea. I spent many a cheerful evening in Mr. L.'s house, in company with others who also partook of his hospitable board. The most remarkable of these was Matthew Prior, who had the character of being one of the best mechanics in the kingdom. He was assay master, a musical instrument maker, and a turner, in which last he particularly excelled. The many remarkable pieces of dexterous workmanship he had done in that way drew upon him the notice of many gentlemen in the two northern counties, with whom also, as an angler, a sportsman, and a jovial companion, he was a welcome guest. It happened, on some pretence or other, that an attempt was made to take away the assay business from Newcastle, which occasioned Prior to be sent for, to be examined by (I believe) a committee of the House of Commons, as to his ability in conducting that business. The ease, the clearness, as well as the straight-forward way in which he answered all questions excited some surprise, as well as approbation. When questioned as to the accuracy of his scale-beam, he said a hair clipped from the back of his hand would turn his scales either way. For a wager, he turned two billiard balls of such equal weights that the difference was as nothing. He was of a most independent cast of character, and open and frank in his conversation. It had been reported that Prior had said of a proud, high-minded gentleman that "he durst do what neither the gentleman nor any of his family dared do." Prior had never said any such thing; but this gentleman took him to task about it, and, with great indignation, accused him of saying so. At this, Prior, in his turn, felt offended, and told him, though he had never said so, he would now say so to his face. This produced a wager between them; and Matthew told him he would double the bet if he pleased. "Now," said the gentleman, in high ill-humour, "what is it you dare do?" "Do!" said Prior, "I dare spend the last shilling I have in the world!" *

During a great part of the time I have been noticing, the American War was going on. The "press" broke out just after I landed in London, and, to escape the gang, one of our crew came and took refuge with me. This poor fellow, a decent man, had in his youth been on board a ship of war; and, as far as concerned himself, he said he did not mind going again; but the thoughts of being dragged from his family threw him into very great distress. Political writings and debat-

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* Matthew Prior died June 15, 1800, aged 65, and was buried in St. Nicholas' Church, Newcastle.

ings sometimes ran very high between those who were advocates for a system of corruption, and profited by the taxes, and those who were advocates for the liberties of mankind; but it always appeared to me that a very great majority of the people were decidedly against the war. These writings and debatings, which the war occasioned, certainly served greatly to alter the notions and the opinions of the people respecting the purity of the British government, and its representative system; and this attempt at doing it away altogether in America seemed a prelude to the same system of misrule, when, by slower degrees, a future opportunity offered for doing it away at home. In these political debatings, the question was often asked, "Whether the government was made for the people, or the people for the government?" Great numbers, who hoped for the best, still clung to the government under which they had been brought up, and had been taught to revere as excellency itself. While others were contending whether a kingly government or a republic was best, it was generally admitted that a deal might be said *pro* and *con;* for many examples might be adduced of mal-administration under both forms. Some of these disputants would repeat what Pope had said—

"For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight,
"His can't be wrong whose life is in the right;
"For forms of government, it is confest
"That which is best administered is best."

In England the people may boast that their forefathers had a king, in Alfred the Great, the wisest, the bravest, and the best the world ever knew; by whose excellent conduct was laid the foundation of the liberties of his country, and from the influence of which there can be no doubt that the English language will be spoken over the whole Globe. Were kings to endeavour to follow his example, and ever to keep in mind that they and their ministers ought to consider themselves as a royal society for the promotion of arts and sciences, and of everything that can enlighten the minds and ameliorate the condition of mankind, they would do right. Kings would then reign in the hearts of the great overwhelming mass of the people, and no confederacy or conspiracy of nobles or others could ever upset their rule. But, while they continue to suffer themselves to be surrounded by flatterers, sycophants, and selfish knaves, no good need be expected; for they are thus brought up, like petted children, and have not the same chance of becoming wise as other men. Thus situated, they are to be pitied. One would think that the respectable part of the old nobility, or other opulent men of great abilities, might be found with patriotism enough to perform the offices of the ministry gratis, scorning high salaries, and only looking to honourable distinction. This would of itself put an end to corruption. Justices of the peace take the very great trouble of acting their parts gratuitously; churchwardens and overseers do the same; and why do not the great and rich men of the land follow the praiseworthy example?

In reverting back to take another look at the American war, one may reckon to a certainty of its having been made the subject of debatings, and of furnishing matter for the thinking part of mankind, over the whole of the civilised world. George the Third and his advisers did not, perhaps, think of this, nor its consequences; neither did they ever contemplate the mighty events they were thus bringing about in rearing and establishing the wisest and greatest republic and nation the world ever saw. When its immense territory is filled with an enlightened population, and its government, like a rock, founded on the liberties and the rights of man, it is beyond human comprehension to foresee the strides the nation will make towards perfection. It is likely they will cast a compassionate eye on the rest of the world, grovelling under arbitrary power, banish it from the face of the earth, and kill despots with a frown. One would fain hope, however, that kings and their advisers will coolly reflect upon the improving intellect of mankind, and take measures to govern in a way more befitting the state of the people over whom they are called upon to rule.

During the long continuance of this war, and the debatings as before noticed, I became acquainted with a number of young men of a literary turn, who had a library of books. I did not join their society, but I sometimes dined with them at their annual, cheerful dinner. I was never fond of public dinners or dining parties; and I think I would not have partaken with them had I not been tempted to do so by way of hearing their songs, with which I felt much charmed, but particularly with the Scotch songs, with which one of the members (Walter Cannaway) used so highly to delight the company on these occasions. He, according to my notions, was the best singer I ever heard. I have always been more charmed with the human voice, when well attuned, than with any instrumental music whatever; and his voice was extremely good. Many others, perhaps, might have as good a voice, and as correct an ear for music as he, and would have been equally as charming had they not been spoiled by the fashion they had got into to please the surfeited tastes of coxcombical connoisseurs and a vitiated, aping public. I have ever been much disgusted to hear and see these spoiled performers, quavering and spinning out their unnatural falsetto voices until almost spent. It showed well how long-winded these kind of performers were, but I never could sit to hear any of them; as it appeared to me to be anything but music, or music run mad.

On my first going to business, I had an opportunity of sometimes hearing musical concerts. My master belonged to a musical society; and, when I had any message to take to him, I was commonly invited to remain. The two sons of Charles Avison, the musical composer, belonged to this society, and Mr. Beilby and family were on terms of intimacy with them. I also occasionally heard the band at the theatre, but I cannot say I felt much pleasure in listening to them, and I well remember on one occasion of setting them aside. The late Mr. Dibden, who often called upon me, had some performance to exhibit at our theatre, and had quarrelled with the theatrical band on account of their exorbitant demands; and, in this dilemma, he expressed himself much disappointed, and knew not what to do. I told him I thought, if he would leave the matter to me, I could set all right; and I instantly applied to old Wm. Lamshaw, the Duke of Northumberland's piper, to play at the theatre. I being well-acquainted with the old man, he readily assented. I then told my friend Dibden what I had done, and satisfied him as to the preference the audience would give to the piper. In this I was not mistaken; for all went well off, and everyone expressed both pleasure and surprise at the change.

Some time before the American war broke out, there had been a lack of musical performers in our streets, and in this interval, I used to engage John Peacock, our inimitable performer, to play on the Northumberland or small pipes; and with his old tunes, his lilts, his pauses, and his variations, I was always excessively pleased. At one time I was afraid that these old tunes, and this ancient instrument, might, from neglect of encouragement, get out of use, and I did everything in my power to prevent this, and to revive it, by urging Peacock to teach pupils to become masters of this kind of music; and I flatter myself that my efforts were not lost. I was afraid that the Northumberland family were beginning to feel indifferent, or to overlook these their ancient minstrels, who had for ages past been much esteemed, and kept in attendance by their forefathers. It was, however, with great pleasure I found that they had appointed William Cant,* a pupil of old William Lamshaw, to be piper to the Northumberland Regiment of Militia ; and he kept up with great spirit and effect this department of their music while he remained in the regiment. Nor was the regiment behind in the other departments of music ; for it was allowed by judges that their fifers and drummers were inferior to none in the kingdom. One man, in particular—John Bowman—it was asserted, was the best performer on the fife that was "known in the world." Certain it is that every year for twenty-two years, he challenged the fifers of every regiment stationed in Newcastle, to a trial of skill on that instrument ; but none of them could compete with him.

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* On his death, I sent the following notice to Mr. Walker's newspaper :—"July 15th, 1821, died, Mr. William Cant, of the Blue Bell Inn, Newcastle, aged 70 years. He was an excellent performer on the violin and the Northumberland pipes ; and, like his great predecessors on the latter instrument—Turnbull, Gilley, Old Lamshaw, and Peacock—he kept up the ancient tunes with all their charming lilts and pauses, unspoiled by the *modern improvers* of music, with their 'Idiot notes impertinently long.' He played 'his native wood-notes wild,' such as pleased the ears of the yeomanry of old at Otterburn, Hedgley Moor, and Flodden Field. For—

'Whene'er his pipe did silence break
You'd thought the instrument would speak.'"

He could draw out tones from it the most soft and graceful, as well as the most stunning and loud, such as the ear could not endure in a room, and which were only fit to be heard in the open air.

CHAPTER XI.

I HAVE noticed several of my friends and acquaintances whose characters stood high in my estimation. I have now another to introduce, the play-fellow of my youth, Thomas Lawson, as remarkable as any of them. He left Tyneside, his and my home, and came to Newcastle about 1777 or '78, to launch out into the world of exertion and turmoil; and, from his abilities and integrity, he seemed well befitted to make a great figure in it, and, had he been spared, he would, in my opinion, have shone out like another Benjamin Franklin. He was for a short time one of my schoolfellows at Ovingham; but, from his father having been beggared by the failure of a coal-owner for whom he had been employed many years, my young friend was obliged to leave school, and to seek out some employment for himself. In the interim, he took up his abode in my father's house as a home. The first employment that my companion got was that of a plough-driver. He next became a farmer's servant, and afterwards a manager of a farm and brewery. In all these departments, he was distinguished for his industry, good sense, good management, and great integrity. It happened, however, that he, being handsome in his person and manly in his deportment, his employer began to suspect that the young lady of the house was showing a marked partiality towards him; and this having occasioned some frowns and hints which his spirit could not brook, he gave up his place and set off to Newcastle, where he bound himself to a printer, as a pressman; for which he was to be paid 8s. per week. With this wage, he contrived to maintain himself, and to pay out of it for a night-school education. His progress was truly astonishing in figures, languages, the use of the globes, &c.; but his memory was so tenacious that he retained whatever he learned, and he could repeat the longest harangue, (as far as I was able to judge) verbatim. I once had an opportunity of witnessing this, in his repeating the whole of a charity sermon, preached by the eloquent the Rev. Dr. Scott, of Simonburn. While he was employed in the drudgery of the printing press, he, at the same time, made himself master of the business of a compositor. Shortly after, he left this employment, and married a young woman of respectable parentage. It happened that the printing of a Bible in numbers had been established; but the publisher, either from mismanagement, or something amiss, was on the verge of a failure. In this state of affairs, Lawson turned his attention to the business, and applied to his wife's friends for assistance, but they could, at that time, only spare him about thirty pounds; and with this sum in hand, he made a proposal for purchasing the types, and everything belonging to the printing office. It is singular enough that the printer referred to, having left Newcastle, lived and had his printing office in the governor's house at Tynemouth, whither I went with my friend when the bargain was to be closed between them. He now commenced business on his own account, but how long he had to struggle through difficulties, before he got well established, I have forgotten. It is remarkable that he met with unsolicited aid from many friends ; for every one who knew him became interested in his welfare. He lived till he surmounted every obstacle to his prosperity ; but, in doing this, his too great application and exertion ruined his health. He pined away and died, in a house close by mine at the Forth, on the 7th March, 1783, aged 31 years. I, with many other of his friends, accompanied his remains to Ovingham, where he was buried. This was the first time in my life that I felt poignant grief.

My old schoolfellow and friend, Philip Gregson, of the Custom House, London, being on a visit to his relatives and friends in the north, in 1780, I, being fond of rambling, proposed setting him on his return home, as far as York, if he would walk with me to that city, to which he agreed ; and, after spending a day or two with him there, we parted. On my return, I took the road by Boroughbridge to Ripon, where I stayed a short time till I had viewed the country round it, and particularly Studley Park and its beautiful scenery. I then returned to Darlington, and changed my route to the westward, by Barnard Castle, Bowes, over Stainmore to Brough, Appleby, and Penrith ; and from thence to my uncle's at Ainstable. On leaving him and his family, I walked home that day to Cherryburn, and so on the next to Newcastle.

I have not interlarded this journey with any of my remarks on the road—on the grandeur of York Minster—the large upright stones called "The Devil's Arrows," near Boroughbridge—the extensive prospects from Cross Fell, &c.; and therefore the whole of this may be regarded as merely one of my "tramps," and a description of these places by others may be referred to.

In another of my perambulations, I prevailed on an acquaintance to accompany me to Berwick. We set off, on an Easter Sunday morning, in 1784, by the seaside, and our first halt was at Chevington, beyond Widdrington. I had not broken my fast, and was quite ready to make a hearty meal upon some dry barley cake and cheese, whilst my thirsty companion, with equal pleasure, enjoyed himself with hearty draughts of ale. We reached Lesbury in the afternoon, and, when my fellow-traveller sat down, he observed, that I might go on if I pleased, but he would not move a foot further that night. Next day, after sauntering about a little in the villages on our road, we reached Elwick, the hospitable mansion of my friend Thomas Younghusband, Esq., where we stopped that night. Mr. Younghusband happened to have a few of his friends to spend the evening with him. We got on to make merry and to sing songs; and, when it came to my companion's turn, the party were so agreeably surprised and pleased at his performance that we did not separate till the morning. My companion and I set off to Berwick, and, after seeing the town, we returned to Elwick by Holy Island. In the performance of this day's journey we had to encounter some difficulties which might have been attended with fatal consequences. We had been cautioned against attempting, after a certain hour, to walk across the extensive flat left bare by the ebb tide. We were beyond the time named, but resolved to proceed, and had to run the greatest part of the way; and it was well we did so; for, before we reached the Island, we found the tide was rapidly advancing between us and the shore, and we had to wade deeply before we reached it. On looking back, over the flat space we had just left, we were surprised to view it as a sea. My companion, being rather corpulent, was in a sad state of perspiration with over exertion, and I think I was not much better, from the anxiety I felt for him, while I was constantly urging him to mend his speed. We now hastened to a public-house, dripping with wet, where my companion took a few glasses of gin, and prevailed on me to take one along with him; and this is the first glass of that liquor I ever recollect taking. Our next business was to get a boat to set us across the arm of the sea, between the island and the nearest shore, towards Elwick. It was then nearly dark; and, before the boatmen got us rowed across, it was quite so. Where they landed us we knew not, but we had to wade to the dry beach. In shaping our course to Elwick, we lost ourselves in the fields, and it was late before we arrived there. We were in as dirty a state as wet and mire could make us. Mrs. Younghusband, however, lost no time in fitting us up with dry clothes, and in making us as comfortable as she could. My companion having some business of his own to attend to, I remained a day or two at Elwick, and made a few visits with Mr. Younghusband in the neighbourhood. Mr. Y. had to attend a meeting of freeholders, on some election business, at the town hall, Alnwick, and I accompanied him thither. Never having before heard any speeches, I was much entertained with those now made. This being about the time that Mr. Pitt came into the administration, and being the son of the great Chatham, most people hoped and expected he would follow the bright, the patriotic example that had been set him; but one gentleman appeared to differ in opinion from the majority, and, in what I conceived to be an eloquent speech, foretold that he would turn out, in character, to be quite a different kind of man.

About the year 1790, I became a member of "Swarley's Club," held in the evenings, at the Black Boy Inn. This was the most rational society or meeting I ever knew. The few rules which bound us together were only verbal. The first was that every member should conduct himself with decorum, and as a gentleman. If any one transgressed on this point, he was immediately fined, and if he did not pay, he was sent to Coventry, or dismissed. On entering the room, every member paid fourpence, which was to be spent in refreshment. Any member might introduce his friend at the same expense. There were no fines for non-attendance and no regular debatings allowed on any subject but such as might occasionally arise out of the passing conversation, and the company separated at ten o'clock. Conversations amongst the friends thus associated,—consisting of merchants, or respectable tradesmen,—were carried on without restraint, and only interrupted for the moment while the president claimed attention to any particular news of the day that might be worth notice. Such a place of meeting proved convenient and pleasant to many a stranger who visited the town, and the expense was as nothing. It may seem strange that, out of a fourpenny club like this, there was commonly an overplus left, to give away at Christmas and Easter to some charitable purpose. I went to this club when I had time to spare in an evening, and seldom missed a week to an end. This happy society was at length broken up, at the time when war on behalf of despotism was raging, and the spy system was set afloat. Some spies, and others of the same stamp, contrived to get themselves introduced, and to broach political questions, for the purpose of exciting debates, and feeling the pulse of the members, who before this had very seldom touched upon subjects of that kind.

Besides being kept busy with the routine business of our work-office, I was often engaged in executing wood cuts for publishers and printers, at various times from about the year 1788 to 1790. The first of any importance was the wood cuts of Roman altars, and the arms of the Bishops of Durham, for "Hutchinson's History of Durham," in which my friend, the late George Allan, Esq., of the Grange, Darlington, took a conspicuous part. A set of cuts was done for "Goldsmith's Deserted Village," for Mr. Walker, printer, of Hereford. Mr. Nicholson, printer of Ludlow and Poughnill, the publisher of "Elegant Selections from Various Authors," employed me to embellish some of these with wood cuts. My old friend, William Bulmer, of the Shakespeare Printing Office, London, also employed me to execute the cuts for "Parnell's Hermit" and "Goldsmith's Deserted Village." Many other cuts were done, from time to time, for printers in various parts of the kingdom. These formed an almost endless variety. I engraved a series of copper plates, at a low rate, for Sir Harry Liddell's and Captain Consett's "Tour to Lapland," in 1786. My partner and self were busily engaged in engraving, about the year 1796, the plan of the proposed canal from Newcastle to Carlisle, as projected by Mr. Chapman, engineer, and plans of estates and views of the mansion houses of a few gentlemen who opposed the canal, on the north side of the Tyne. After a great deal of scheming and manœuvering, under the management of an attorney of great ability, the whole of this great, this important national as well as local undertaking was baffled and set aside. Most men of discernment were of opinion that the coalowners "below bridge" were the cause of it. The canal, as projected by Mr. Dodd, in 1795, would have certainly opened out a territory of coal that might have affected their interest. It would appear, at least, that they dreaded it; and in this, as in almost every other case, private interest was found to overpower public good.

CHAPTER XII.

Having, from the time that I was a schoolboy, been displeased with most of the figures in children's books, and particularly with those of the "Three Hundred Animals," the figures in which, even at that time, I thought I could depicture much better; and having afterwards very often turned the matter over in my mind, of making improvements in that publication—I at last came to the determination of making the attempt. The extreme interest I had always felt in the hope of administering to the pleasure and amusement of youth, and judging from the feelings I had experienced myself that they would be affected in the same way as I had been, whetted me up and stimulated me to proceed. In this, my only reward besides was the great pleasure I felt in imitating nature. That I should ever do anything to attract the notice of the world, in the manner that has been done, was the farthest thing in my thoughts, and so far as I was concerned myself at that time, I minded little about any self-interested considerations. These intentions I communicated to my partner; and, though he did not doubt of my being able to succeed, yet, being a cautious and thinking man, he wished to be more satisfied as to the probability of such a publication paying for the labour. On this occasion, being little acquainted with the nature of such undertakings, we consulted Mr. Solomon Hodgson, bookseller and editor of the "Newcastle Chronicle," as to the probability of its success, &c., when he warmly encouraged us to proceed.

Such animals as I knew, I drew from memory on the wood; others which I did not know were copied from "Dr. Smellie's Abridgement of Buffon," and other naturalists, and also from the animals which were from time to time exhibited in itinerant collections. Of these last, I made sketches first from memory, and then corrected and finished the drawings upon the wood from a second examination of the different animals. I began this business of cutting the blocks with the figure of the dromedary, on the 15th November, 1785, the day on which my father died. I then proceeded in copying such figures as above named as I did not hope to see alive. While I was busied in drawing and cutting the figures of animals, and also in designing and engraving the vignettes, Mr. Beilby, being of a bookish or reading turn, proposed, in his evenings at home, to write or compile the descriptions. With this I had little more to do than furnishing him, in many conversations and by written memoranda, with what I knew of animals, and blotting out, in his manuscript, what was not truth. In this way we proceeded till the book was published in 1790.

The greater part of these wood cuts were drawn and engraved at night, after the day's work of the shop was over. In these evenings, I frequently had the company of my friend the Rev. Richard Oliphant,* who took great pleasure in seeing me work, and who occasionally read to me the sermons he had composed for the next Sunday. I was also often attended, from a similar curiosity, by my friend, the Rev. Thomas Hornby,† lecturer at St. John's Church. He would not, like my friend Oliphant, adjourn to a public house, and join in a tankard of ale, but he had it sent for to my work-place. We frequently disagreed in our opinions as to religious matters, he being, as I thought, an intolerant, high churchman; but, notwithstanding this, he was a warm well-wisher and kind friend, and was besides of so charitable a disposition that his purse was ever open to relieve distress, and he would occasionally commission me to dispose of a guinea anonymously to persons in want.

As soon as the "History of Quadrupeds" appeared, I was surprised to find how rapidly it sold. Several other editions quickly followed, and a glut of praises was bestowed upon the book. These praises however, excited envy, and were visibly followed by the balance of an opposite feeling from many people at home; for they raked together, and blew up, the embers of envy into a transient blaze; but the motives by which I was actuated stood out of the reach of its sparks, and they returned into the heap whence they came, and fell into dust. I was much more afraid to meet the praises which were gathering around than I was of the sneers which they excited; and a piece of poetry appearing in the newspaper, I was obliged, for some time, to shun "Swarley's Club," of which the writer, George Byles,* was a member, to avoid the warm and sincere compliments that awaited me there.

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* Afterwards curate of Longhorsley.

† The Rev. Thomas Hornby, son of Alderman Hornby, died in the prime of life, on the 28th August, 1798, and was buried at Gosforth.

I had long made up my mind not to marry whilst my father and mother lived, in order that my undivided attention might be bestowed upon them. My mother had, indeed, recommended a young person in the neighbourhood to me as a wife. She did not know the young lady intimately, but she knew she was modest in her deportment, handsome in her person, and had a good fortune; and, in compliance with this recommendation, I got acquainted with her, but was careful not to proceed further, and soon discovered that, though her character was innocence itself, she was mentally one of the weakest of her sex. The smirking lasses of Tyneside had long thrown out their jibes against me, as being a woman-hater, but in this they were greatly mistaken. I had, certainly, been very guarded in my conduct towards them, as I held it extremely wrong and cruel to sport with the feelings of any one. In this, which was one of my resolves, sincerity and truth were my guides. As I ever considered a matrimonial connection as a business of the utmost importance, and which was to last till death made the separation, while looking about for a partner for life, my anxious attention was directed to the subject. I had long considered it to be the duty of every man, on changing his life, to get a healthy woman for his wife, for the sake of his children, and a sensible one, as a companion, for his own happiness and comfort,—that love is the natural guide in this business, and much misery is its attendant when that is wanting. This being the fixed state of my mind, I permitted no mercenary considerations to interfere. Impressed with these sentiments, I had long, my dear Jane, looked upon your mother as a suitable helpmate for me. I had seen her in prosperity and in adversity; and in the latter state she appeared to me to the greatest advantage. In this she soared above her sex, and my determination was fixed. In due time we were married, and from that day to this no cloud, as far as concerned ourselves, has passed over us, to obscure a life-time of uninterrupted happiness.

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* George Byles came from one of the southern counties, and commenced as a teacher in Newcastle. He was gentlemanly in his manners and conversation, and of a most lively and animated cast of character.

My dear Isabella died,
After a long and painful Illness,
On the 1st of February, 1826,
Aged 72;
The best of Wives and very best
of Mothers.

During the time I was busied with the figures of the "History of Quadrupeds," many jobs interfered to cause delay; one of which was the wood cut of the Chillingham wild bull, for the late Marmaduke Tunstal, Esq., of Wycliffe. This very worthy gentleman and good naturalist honoured me with his approbation of what I had done, and was one of our correspondents. He, or my friend George Allan, Esq., employed me to undertake the job; and, on Easter Sunday, 1789, I set off, accompanied by an acquaintance, on foot to Chillingham on this business. After tarrying a little with friends at Morpeth and Alnwick, we took Huln Abbey on our way across the country to the place of our destination. Besides seeing the various kinds of pheasants, &c., at the last-named place, little occurred to attract attention, except our being surrounded, or beset, in passing over a moor, by burning heather, and afterwards passing over the surface of immense old winter wreaths of frozen snow. Arrived at Chillingham, we took up our abode with my kind old friend John Bailey, and spent a cheerful evening with him after our fatigue. Next day, Mr. B. accompanied me to the park, for the purpose of seeing the wild cattle. This, however, did not answer my purpose; for I could make no drawing of the bull, while he, along with the rest of the herd, was wheeling about, and then fronting us, in the manner described in the "History of Quadrupeds." I was therefore obliged to endeavour to see one which had been conquered by his rival, and driven to seek shelter alone, in the quarryholes or in the woods; and, in order to get a good look at one of this description, I was under the necessity of creeping on my hands and knees, to leeward, and out of his sight; and I thus got my sketch or memorandum, from which I made my drawing on the wood. I was sorry my figure was made from one before he was furnished with his curled or shaggy neck and mane.

On our return home, my companion and I took up our abode for two days and nights, at Eslington, in the apartments of our kind and hearty friend, John Bell, then steward to Sir Harry Liddell, Bart, and afterwards a merchant at Alnmouth. Having made a drawing from the large Newfoundland dog kept there, and rambled about visiting some of Mr. Bell's friends, we then bent our way homewards, highly gratified with the journey, crowned as it was with hospitality and kindness which could not be surpassed.

In the year 1790, I was employed much in the same way as I had been in other years about that period; but this was besides marked by an event which enwarped and dwelt on my mind. No doubt all thinking men in their passage through life must have experienced feelings of a similar kind. My old and revered preceptor, the Rev. Christopher Gregson, died this year. No sooner did the news of his extreme illness reach me, than I set off, in my usual way, and with all speed, to Ovingham. I instantly rushed into his room, and there I found his niece in close attendance upon him. With her, being intimately acquainted, I used no ceremony, but pulled the curtain aside, and then beheld my friend, in his last moments. He gave me his last look, but could not speak. Multitudinous reflections of things that were passed away, hurried on my mind, and these overpowered me. I knew not what to say, except "Farewell for ever, farewell!" Few men have passed away on Tyneside so much respected as Mr. Gregson. When he was appointed to the curacy of Ovingham, I understand his income was not more than thirty pounds per annum. Thus set down, he began by taking pupils to board and educate, chiefly as Latin scholars; and Mrs. Gregson, after my mother left him, did everything in her power to make the seminary respectable. He afterwards, however, commenced teaching on a more extended scale, by taking in scholars of all kinds, from their A, B, C's, to the classics. In this, his task must have been of the most arduous description, which he got through without any usher or assistant. His assiduity must have attracted the notice of the late Thomas Charles Bigge, Esq., of Benton, the lay rector, for he added some land to the glebe, by way of bettering his condition. Little as this farm was, as to its magnitude, it enabled him, by his good management and unceasing industry, to show himself a good farmer, and he was not a little vain on being complimented on this score. As a clergyman, he was not one of the fittest for that very important office; but this was chiefly owing to his defective voice, which was so low and raucous, that his hearers could not so well profit by his sensible discourses. In another way—I mean as a village lawyer—he stood pre-eminent. His pen was ever ready at the service of his parishioners, and whatever dispute arose amongst them there was never any objection to leave the matter to the decision of Mr. Gregson; and, I have often heard it asserted that there was not one lawsuit in the parish while he was minister there. He set out in life on this poor curacy, upon a system of great economy, and perhaps, like other frugal people, it grew upon him till he was accused of "nearness;" but, be this as it may, he accumulated, after a life of great good management, a sum of about nine hundred pounds. If his pen was ever ready to serve his parishioners, so, on certain occasions was his purse; for he eyed with great attention the situation of such of his neighbours as were industrious; and, when he found these were struggling under untoward circumstances, or unforseen losses, without being solicited, he lent them money to ward off the evil, and to serve their need.

CHAPTER XIII.

WHILE the sale of edition after edition of the "Quadrupeds" was going on with great success, I turned my thoughts to the "History of British Birds." I felt greatly charmed with, and had long paid great attention to, the subject; and I had busied myself very much in reading various works. As far as I can now recollect, the first books I had become acquainted with were "Brookes and Miller's Natural History," and "Dr. Smellie's Abridgement of Buffon." These were now thrown, as it were, into the back-ground; having been succeeded by Pennant's works. I might name others I had perused, chiefly lent to me by my kind friend George Allan, Esq. These consisted of "Albin's History of Birds," Belon's very old book, Willoughby and Ray, &c. Mr. John Rotherham* gave me "Gesner's Natural History." With some of these I was in raptures. Willoughby and Ray struck me as having led the way to truth, and to British Ornithology. The late Michael Brian, Esq., of London, lent me the splendid volumes, "Planche Enluminée," of Buffon, and George Silvertop, Esq., of Minstracres, "Edward's Natural History." I was much pleased with "White's History of Selborne." Pennant, however, opened out the largest field of information, and on his works I bestowed the most attention. Latham seems to have wound up the whole, and I have often lamented that it was not—by being embellished with correct figures—made a great national work, like the Count de Buffon's. The last of our Ornithologists, and one of the most indefatigable, was the late Col. George Montgu,* author of the "Ornithological Dictionary.'

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* Mr. John Rotherham, son of the late Dr. Rotherham, of Newcastle, who had been a pupil of the good and great Linnæus.

As soon as it was spread abroad that I was engaged with the history of birds and their figures, I was in consequence led into a seemingly endless correspondence with friends and amateurs; so much so, that I often felt myself unable duly to acknowledge the obligations I owed them, and many a letter I have written after being wearied out with the labours of the day.

At the beginning of this undertaking I made up my mind to copy nothing from the works of others, but to stick to nature as closely as I could; and for this purpose, being invited by Mr. Constable, the then owner of Wycliffe, I visited the extensive museum there, collected by the late Marmaduke Tunstal, Esq., to make drawings of the birds. I set off from Newcastle on the 16th July, 1791, and remained at the above beautiful place nearly two months, drawing from the stuffed specimens. I lodged in the house of John Goundry, the person who preserved the birds for Mr. Tunstal; and boarded at his father's, George Goundry, the old miller there. Whilst I remained at Wycliffe, I frequently dined with the Rev. Thomas Zouch,* the rector of the parish. He watched my going out of church on the Sundays, where I attended, accompanied by old Goundry, to invite me to dine with him. On these occasions he often made the character of his late neighbour, Mr. Tunstal, and of George Goundry, the subject of his conversation, and dwelt with great pleasure on the excellence of both. Mr. Tunstal was a Roman Catholic, and had a chapel in his own house; Mr. Zouch was a Church of England minister; and George Goundry was a Deist; and yet these three uncommonly good men, as neighbours, lived in constant charity and goodwill towards each other. One might dwell long with pleasure on such singularly good characters. I wish the world was better stocked with them.

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* George Montagu, Esq., died in July, 1815. I have heard that he was killed by the overturning of a carriage in which he was travelling.

I have often reflected with pain on the asperity with which one description of Christians has commonly treated others who differed from them in opinion on religious matters; or, rather, as to their different modes of faith; and I have thought that the time would come when that cruel, bloody, and disgusting portion of history would not be believed, which has recorded the fact that one denomination of Christians actually burned others alive, who differed from them in opinion on matters which ought to have been considered beneath contempt. But, judging from the past, it is certain that, when men give up their reason, and substitute faith, or anything else, in lieu thereof, there is nothing however absurd that may not be believed, and no punishments, however cruel, that may not be resorted to, to enforce that belief. Men thus degraded may fairly be called *man-tigers*, being fitted for any cruel, wicked purpose; and, under equally wicked governments, they have been guided and commanded to deluge the earth with blood. It is strange to think that this should have been the case, when it is considered that the whole of the authorities are derived from one and the same pure source; bewildered, indeed, by the twisted imaginations of ignorance, bigotry, and superstition.

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* The Rev. Thomas Zouch, D.D., F.L.S., prebendary of Durham, and rector of Scrayingham, Yorkshire. This venerable divine was born in 1737, at Sandal, and died there on the 17th Dec., 1813. He had been offered the bishopric of Carlisle, but refused it.

The inspired and benevolent Author of Christianity taught neither intolerance nor persecution. The doctrines He laid down are plain, pure, and simple. They hold out mercy to the contrite, aid to the humble, and eternal happiness to the good. For my own part, it is long since I left off bewildering myself with dogmas and creeds, and I feel pity for those that do so. I am quite clear and willing to believe and to allow, that, whatever modes of faith honest and well-meaning people think best to adopt, they may in sincerity of heart, and to the best of their judgments, be doing what is called serving God. They surely ought not to interfere with the creeds of others, who are equally as sincere as themselves in the means they pursue for the same end. However various these modes of faith may be, there is one rule that ought to guide the whole, and it appears to me to be simple and easy to comprehend,—and that one is, that all men, to the utmost of their power, should endeavour through life to steer clear of everything that may degrade their own souls; that the mysterious, incorporated compound may not, when summoned to leave this world, have to appear before Omnipotence polluted and debased. The man who attends to this will fear nothing, but that of erring and doing wrong. He will fear the face of no man. The little, strutting authorities of despotism he will despise, and the virtuous magistrate will ever be his friend. He will break no good laws that have been made for the guidance of man in society; and, as to his religion, that is an affair between himself and his Maker only. With the Author of his Being he will, with unentangled mind, commune freely, at all times, when his spirit moves him to do so; and no man ever did, or ever will, feel himself happy that does not pursue this course through life.

Ever since I habituated myself to think, I have always seen, as clearly as I could see anything, that, it is the intention of the Deity that mankind should live in a state of civilised society, and that no period of human existence can be comfortable without the pleasures and endearments of social intercourse. Every object in nature that can be contemplated shews this; and the full and exact fitness of all its component parts clearly prove that man, from his social nature, is destined to live in this state. He has been endowed with reason, as his guide, for the purpose of regulating and conducting the whole; but, when that guide is neglected, and he suffers his selfish propensities and bad passions to *mis*lead him from the path of rectitude, from that moment, everything, so far as this reaches, goes wrong. For reasons of this kind, it is necessary that equitable and just laws should be made and enforced, to restrain vice from breaking down the barriers that are erected to protect virtue and patriotism. To break through these laws is sin. But, in the present wretched state of society, it may be difficult to bring about such a reformation of manners as would ensure the accomplishment of so desirable an end; for it appears to me that the character of mankind ought to be new modelled before this can effectually be done.

Having long busied myself in wading through systems of natural history,—the orders, genera, species and varieties,—the whim has often struck me to lay down an imaginary one of classing mankind. The *genus homo* may be made to consist of three species and their varieties. The first (including in one, the wise and the good) is honest men; the second is knaves; and the third fools. These and their gradations and varieties, gliding into each other, form the present jumbled mass of society—the community of which we all form a part. As any of these may happen to predominate in the government of society, so, in exact proportion, will the good, bad, and indifferent effects of their management be felt by the whole people. I think it will be admitted that, out of the first species ought to be chosen the persons,—every man according to his mental powers and the education he may have received to call forth these powers, —to fill every public office from the constable upwards. Out of the two latter species, when conjoined, are formed the great mass of the wicked, gross, vulgar herd (high and low) of mankind. Amongst these, knaves of great ability ought to be particularly guarded against. They are a kind of splendid devils who have from time immemorial spread abroad much misery in the world; but, notwithstanding their abilities, they would not have got forward in their public wickedness, nor have formed their majorities, had they not enlisted, as tools, their ready-made auxiliaries—the fools; and, if we take only a slight glance at individual misery, it will be seen that most of it is inflicted by one man upon another :—

> " Man's inhumanity to Man
> Makes countless thousands mourn."

Could this be remedied, what a beautiful world would this appear to thousands, instead of their being obliged to view it through the medium of an almost perpetual cheerless gloom.

I have often amused myself in considering the character of the canine species, and of comparing it, and its varieties, with those of the untutored part of mankind; and it is curious and interesting to observe the similarity between them. To his master the dog is an uncommonly submissive, obedient, and faithful servant, and seems to look upon him as if he were a god; his sagacity and his courage are equally conspicuous; and, in defence of his master, he will suffer death. But to his own species he is ill-behaved, selfish, cruel, and unjust; he only associates with his fellows for the purpose of packing together to destroy other animals, which cannot be effected otherwise. He will sometimes, indeed, let a supplicating dog, into which he has inspired terror, sneak off; and I have often watched to see the wary, circumspect plan that a strange dog adopts on his being obliged to pass through a village, or through amongst those of his equally ill-behaved brethren, the butchers' dogs in a town. It is curious to see the stranger, upon these occasions, view his danger, and then affect lameness, and go "hirpling" through amongst them unmolested. I knew their instinct was surprising, but some of their reasoning powers I had not tried; and, for this purpose, when a boy, I cut two thin slices of meat and plastered the insides with mustard, and then threw it to one of my father's dogs. This, he being very apt at "kepping" caught in his mouth, and, as quickly as he could, got quit of it again; and, from that time, he would rather run the risk of losing it than "kep" any more. To prove how far selfishness and malignity would operate upon him, I placed two basins filled with very hot, fat broth, at a distance from each other, when he ran from one to the other to prevent a spaniel bitch from partaking of either of them. His attention was so taken up with thus watching her, that at length his patience was exhausted, by going so often from one basin to the other, that, with the utmost vengeance, he seized her, and tore away his mouthful of skin from her side.

On my return from Wycliffe, being thoroughly drenched with an incessant rain, I called upon an old and much-esteemed schoolfellow, at Bishop Auckland, and spent a day or two with him, in busy converse about our former transactions at school, &c. Perhaps few have passed through life without experiencing the pleasure that a retrospect of the times gone by thus afford to old cronies, in talking over the recollections of youthful frolics, and even of the discipline which followed in consequence of them.

As soon as I arrived in Newcastle, I immediately began to engrave from the drawings of the birds I had made at Wycliffe; but I had not been long thus engaged till I found the very great difference between preserved specimens and those from Nature; no regard having been paid, at that time, to fix the former in their proper attitudes, nor to place the different series of the feathers so as to fall properly upon each other. It has always given me a great deal of trouble to get at the markings of the dishevelled plumage; and, when done with every pains, I never felt satisfied with them. I was on this account driven to wait for birds newly shot, or brought to me alive, and in the intervals employed my time in designing and engraving tail-pieces, or vignettes. My sporting friends, however, supplied me with birds as fast as they could; but none more so than my kind friend the late Major H. F. Gibson, of the 4th Dragoons. Lieut.-Col. Dalton, Major Shore, Captain (now General) Dalbiac, and other officers of the same regiment, also shewed great attention to the growing work. Besides these, many birds were sent to me by friends from various parts of the Kingdom, but the obligations I owe are mostly acknowledged in their proper places in the work. After working many a late hour upon the cuts, the first volume of the book was at length finished at press in September, 1797. Mr. Beilby undertook the writing or compilation of this the first volume, in which I assisted him a great deal more than I had done with the Quadrupeds. After this, Mr. Beilby gave up the engraving business, and dedicated his whole time to the watch-crystal and clock manufactory, in which he had been long engaged before our separation.

The printing of other editions of the first volume of the Birds still met with a ready sale; but some disputes happening respecting the printing of the Quadrupeds, Mr. Beilby, who now sought repose, and could not be turmoiled with disputes of any kind, sold me his share of that publication. Sometime before the second volume of the Birds was put to press, he also sold me his share of the first volume. I had no sooner agreed to give the price demanded than many recollections of the past crowded upon my mind, and, looking at the unfavourable side, I could not help thinking of the extra labour and time I had spent in the completion of these works, wherein he had born comparatively a small part—not even an equivalent in time and labour in the other department of our business; and in this instance I could not help thinking that he had suffered greediness to take possession of his mind; but, having promised to pay the sum, I made no further observations to any one. On the other side of this account, I called to my remembrance the many obligations I owed him, for the wise admonitions he had given, and the example he had set me, while I was only a wild and giddy youth. These I never could forget, and they implanted so rooted a respect for him that I had grudged nothing I could do to promote his happiness. I had noticed, for some time past, that he had been led under a guidance and influence that made an alteration in his conduct for the worse; and he appeared to me not to be the Ralph Beilby* he had been. I used to think him careful and sometimes penurious, and this disposition might indeed have crept and increased upon him; but, whatever natural failings might be in his composition, these had heretofore been checked and regulated by the rules of morality and religion. It seemed to me that it must have been a maxim with him to do justice to all, but not to confer favours upon any one; and yet he often joined me in conferring such, in various ways, upon our apprentices and others of our workpeople, for which we commonly had dirt thrown in our faces.

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* Ralph Beilby, engraver, Newcastle, died 4th Jan. 1817, aged 73, and was buried at St. Andrew's.

It does not require any great stretch of observation to discover that gratitude is a rare virtue, and that, whatever favours are conferred upon an ungrateful man, he will conclude that these would not have been bestowed upon him had he not deserved them. In these our gifts, I was to blame in thus conferring favours that it would have been as well to let alone. In other charities he was not backward in contributing his mite, but in these matters he was led by wisdom. In the former case, mine, by giving vent to my feelings, were led by folly; but, indeed, these follies were trivial compared with others relative to money matters, in which I had been led away by my feelings, in lending money to some, and in being bound for the payment of it for others, which, if I had been more of his disposition, would not have happened; and I now clearly see and feel that, had it not been for these imprudences, I should, at this day, have found myself in better and very different circumstances than those I am in. My partner, indeed, often watched, and sometimes prevented me, from engaging in such ruinous concerns, and would remark to me that it was impossible to serve any man who would not serve himself.

As soon as Mr. Beilby left me, I was obliged, from necessity, not choice, to commence author.

As soon as each bird was finished on the wood, I set about describing it from my specimen, and at the same time consulted every authority I could meet with, to know what had been said; and this together with what I knew, from my own knowledge, were then compared; and, in this way, I finished as truly as I could the second volume of the History of Birds. I also examined the first volume, with a view to correct its errors, and to add many new figures and descriptions of them to it. Although all this could not be done but by close, and, indeed, severe confinement and application, yet I was supported by the extreme pleasure I felt in depicturing and describing these beautiful and interesting aerial wanderers of the British Isles. I also hoped that my labours might perhaps have the effect of inveigling my youthful countrymen to be smitten with the charms which this branch,—and, indeed, every other department of Natural History,—imparts, and with the endless pleasures afforded to all who wish to "trace Nature up to Nature's God."

While I was thus proceeding, I was encouraged and flattered by amateurs, who took a deep interest in my growing work, and seemed to partake of the ardour in which I had long indulged. From them birds were sent to me from far and near; but, to give a list of the names of these friends, and to detail the kindness I experienced first and last, might indeed be giving vent to my feelings of gratitude, but it would far exceed the bounds prescribed to this Memoir.

CHAPTER XIV.

Whilst I was engaged with figures of the Water-Birds, and the Vignettes, and writing the History, I was greatly retarded by being obliged often to lay that work aside, to do various other jobs in the wood engraving, and also the work of the shop, for my customers in the town, particularly writing engraving, which, I may say, I was obliged to learn and to pursue after Mr. Beilby left me. The most interesting part of this kind of work was plates for bank-notes ; but, as one of the most important of these was a five pound note for the Carlisle Bank, which attracted much notice, it may be right to give some account of it. It happened, one evening, that, whilst I was in company with George Losh, Esq., who was in some way connected with that bank, he asked me if I could engrave a bank note that could not be easily forged. In reply, I told him I thought I could. "Then," said he, "do it immediately ;" and I lost no time in beginning upon it. I had, at that time, never seen a ruling machine, nor the beautiful engine-turning lately brought into use by Perkins, Fairman, and Heath, which were at that time, I believe, utterly unknown. I however, proceeded with my plate, and my object was to make the device look like a wood cut; and in this, though a first attempt, I succeeded; and the number of impressions wanted were sent to Carlisle.

Soon after this, I was told by Sir T. F——, Bart., that his brother, who held some office under government, and was much with the King—George III., whose curiosity was insatiable as to everything relative to the arts—had got one of these bank notes. Sir T. F——'s brother showed it to the King, who greatly admired and approved of it. About two years after this, in the year 1801, Samuel Thornton, Esq., of the Bank of England, wrote to me respecting this note, and wished to know how it was executed, and whether it was done on wood or copper, &c. I was strongly advised, by a friend, not to give the gentlemen of that bank any information whatever about my plate; "for," said he, "as soon as they know the nature of what they are enquiring after, you will hear no more from them." I did not take his advice; and, after a deal of trouble in writing to them, and stating amongst many other matters, that, "though my plate would do well for country banks, it would not do for the great number wanted for the Bank of England," the business ended in nothing. It may perhaps be well, while I am on the subject of bank-notes, to pass over a number of years, and come down to the year 1818, when a commission was appointed to investigate the business of forgery, and to endeavour to prevent it in future. Some time previous to this, I was employed by my friend, John Bailey, Esq., of Chillingham, to engrave plates to prevent a repetition of the pen-and-ink forgeries which had been committed upon the Berwick Bank, which it was found had been better imitations than could be made from copper plates. In this I succeeded; and also, by a simple process, on the plates I engraved for the Northumberland Bank. Immediately on the heel of this, and as soon as the commissioners above-mentioned had commenced their enquiries, it seemed as if the services and abilities of all the artists in the kingdom were held in requisition, to give in their specimens and their schemes for this purpose; and, willing to contribute, all in my power to accomplish so desirable an end, I, amongst many others, gave in my plan. The leading object with me was permanency, or, in other words, to aim at executing a device that would *never* need either alteration or repairs; and the other part of my plan was, that the device should be of such a nature, that all men of common discernment could easily recognize the note as a legitimate one. In my letters to Sir Joseph Banks, I did not mention anything about using types, or how highly I approved of their use, because I knew that others had done so before, and to point out in which way I conceived they would be of importance would now be useless; since the commissioners, or the Bank, have rejected every scheme (so far as I know) that has been laid before them. This to me has always appeared strange; as, in my opinion, there have been several proposals laid before them very efficient for the purpose of preventing forgeries, if not for setting that nefarious work at rest.

The beautiful specimens first produced by Fairman, Perkins, and Heath, from their steel plates or blocks, were, in my opinion, inimitable, and quite sufficient to answer the end intended; and those afterwards brought forward, under the auspices of Sir William Congreve, are nearly of the same character and import. If an engine turner cannot set his lathe, so as to trace or copy the delicate and truly exact curves, lines, &c., which are shown in both, it is not likely that any forgery would ever be attempted upon either of them. If they had been less complex, I should have liked them better; but, as they are, the best engravers on either copper, steel, or wood, will not attempt an imitation. They may, indeed, gaze at them—*but that is all.*

It was always surprising to me that none of the ingenious schemes,—so long under the consideration of the commissioners,—were adopted; but, when I read, in a newspaper, that Mr. Pierce had stood up in the House of Commons, and in answer to a question put to him there, had said, in reply, "that the commissioners were of opinion that *nothing better than the old bank note could be devised to prevent forgery!*"—then, indeed, I could scarcely believe my own eyes,—my astonishment was complete, and my opinion of the whole business of this "mountain in labour" was fixed.

During the time that the business of the commissioners seemed to me to be hanging in suspense, I wrote a letter to Sir Joseph Banks, in which I endeavoured to press upon his attention, and that of his colleagues, as a means of preventing forgery, the necessity of having the blank paper for country bank notes printed with a new device in lieu of the little duty stamp then used, and which had simply in view the collection of the government duty. Sometime after this, a long account of the inventions of Sir William Congreve, Bart., were published in the "Repository of Arts," for March, 1822, setting forth how much country banks, and the whole country was obliged to him, as the inventor of, or the person who first suggested, a scheme so essentially important as this for preventing forgery. As soon as I read this, I answered it in the "Monthly Magazine," of May, 1822, in which I quoted my letters to the commissioners, with the dates bearing upon this very subject, and claimed for myself the merit of having first suggested the scheme. At the same time, I only requested Sir William Congreve would, on the word of a gentleman, say whether or not the scheme was his or mine. Of this neither Sir William nor any of the commissioners took any notice, excepting, indeed, something *purporting to be an answer* to what I had said, by a person in the employ of Sir William, as an artist, which, though it begun very impudently, did not answer my letter at all. This I could not help treating with contempt. To enter into a paper war with such a person, I thought would be great folly. Sir William appears to be going on prosperously, by furnishing bankers with his stamped note papers, and printing them in the way above described.

Sir William Congreve, as a commissioner, had the advantage of seeing the various devices, and of knowing the opinions of the various artists upon these devices, which enabled him to cull and select such as appeared to him best calculated to prevent forgery; and, I think, as he was no artist himself, he should not have taken the credit either of inventor or executor of any of these devices, nor have turned the profit arising from them to his own private account.

CHAPTER XV.

During a severe illness with which I was visited in 1812,—the particulars of which I need not detail to you, my dear Jane, as the part you and your mother and sisters took, in nursing me night and day, must be fresh in all your memories, and which I only here mention on account of its association,—I determined, if I recovered, to go on with a publication of "Æsop's Fables." While I lay helpless, from weakness, and pined to a skeleton, without any hopes of recovery being entertained either by myself or any one else, I became, as it were, all mind and memory. I had presented to my recollection almost everything that had passed through life, both what I had done and what I had left undone. After much debating in my own mind where I should be buried, I fixed upon Ovingham; and, when this was settled, I became quite resigned to the will of Omnipotence, and felt happy. I could not, however, help regretting that I had not published a book similar to "Croxall's Æsop's Fables," as I had always intended to do. I was extremely fond of that book; and, as it had afforded me much pleasure, I thought, with better executed designs, it would impart the same kind of delight to others that I had experienced from attentively reading it. I was also of opinion, that it had (while admiring the cuts) led hundreds of young men into the paths of wisdom and rectitude, and in that way had materially assisted the pulpit.

As soon as I was so far recovered as to be able to sit at the window at home, I began to draw designs upon the wood of the fables and vignettes; and to me this was a most delightful task. In impatiently pushing forward to get to press with the publication, I availed myself of the help of my pupils—my son, William Harvey, and William Temple—who were eager to do their utmost to forward me in the engraving business, and in my struggles to get the book ushered into the world. Notwithstanding the pleasurable business of bringing out this publication, I felt it an arduous undertaking. The execution of the fine work of the cuts, during day-light, was very trying to the eyes, and the compiling or writing the book by candle-light, in my evenings at home, together injured the optic nerve, and that put all the rest of the nerves "out of tune;" so that I was obliged, for a short time, to leave off such intense application until I somewhat recovered the proper tone of memory and of sight. Indeed I found in this book more difficulties to conquer than I had experienced with either the "Quadrupeds" or the "Birds." The work was finished at press on the first of October, 1818. It was not so well printed as I expected and wished.

During the eventful period of the French Revolution, and the wide-spreading war which followed in consequence of it, and in which our government became deeply engaged, extending from 1793 to 1814—a time of blood and slaughter—I frequently, by way of unbending the mind after the labours of the day, spent my evenings in company with a set of staunch advocates for the liberties of mankind, who discussed the passing events mostly with the cool, sensible, and deliberate attention which the importance of the subject required. In partaking in these debatings, I now find I spent rather too much time. I fear it was useless; for it requires little discernment to see that, where a man's interest is at stake, he is very unwilling to hear any argument that militates against it; and people who are well paid are always very loyal. To argue on any subject, unless a principle, or what mathematicians would call a datum, is first laid down to go upon, is only gabble. It begins and must end in nonsense; and I suspect that many of the long, wearisome speeches and debatings, carried on for such a number of years in the Houses of Lords and Commons, as well as many of the innumerable weekly or daily essays, and some of the pamphlets which the revolution and the war gave rise to, were devoid of a right principle—a principle of rectitude to guide them. The causes of this Revolution, and the horrible war which ended it, will form a most interesting subject for the head and the pen of some future historian of a bold and enlightened mind—truly to depicture it in all its bearings, perhaps long after the animosity of party feelings and the parties themselves have passed away.

From the best consideration I have been able to give to the question, I cannot help viewing it in this way. In the year 1789, the French Revolution broke out, first of all from the income of the government not being sufficient to defray its expenditure, or in other words, from its finances having become deranged for want of money, and which the people, having been taxed to the utmost and brought down to poverty, could no longer supply. The aristocracy and the priesthood (the privileged orders, as they were called) contributed little or nothing to support the state; and, instead of being the natural guardians or depositories of the honour and virtue of the nation, they were chiefly known as its oppressors. By exaction, cruelty, and tyranny, the people had long been borne down to the lowest pitch of degradation. They were considered, not as rational human beings, equal in mind and intellect to their oppressors, but as beings made for the purpose only of continually labouring to support them in all their real and imaginary wants. This is nearly the case in all countries where the aristocracy are kept up and blinded by pride and guided by ignorance. In this they are supported by what may be called their satellites—a kind of bastard breed, who, in aping the worst part of the character of those exalted above them, show themselves off as the opulent, aspiring, purse-proud gentry of a country.

> "If aught on earth th' immortal powers deride,
> 'Tis surely this,—the littleness of pride."

This kind of treatment, so long shown to the people of France, could be endured no longer. They, indeed, seemed heartily disposed to settle a rational and just representative government quietly themselves ; but this did not suit the views of the surrounding despots, to whom the very word liberty was offensive, and it was determined, at once, that this attempt of the people to resume their rights should instantly be overwhelmed. For this purpose, immense armed and well-disciplined mercenaries were gathered together, and almost surrounded the country. Thus situated, and remembering the traditionary tales handed down to them of the cruelties and oppressions under which their forefathers had groaned, the French people could not bear their condition any longer. They were driven to madness, and instantly retaliated upon their oppressors, who, they conceived, meant that they and their children's children should continue to be doomed for ages to come. In this state of the public mind, the French people rose simultaneously, as one man, and with unconquerable energy and bravery, like a whirlwind, swept the advocates and the armies of despotism from off the face of the earth. Thus roused, this confederacy of Legitimates, finding or fearing that they might be baffled in their attempts, looked to England for support ; and grieved, indeed, were the advocates of rational liberty to find that these enemies to freedom had not looked in vain; for the government of this free country and free people—long veering, indeed, from the line of rectitude—had readily found pretexts for entering into a war in support of despotism; and war was begun, in the year 1793, against the republican government of France.

It had long been the settled opinion of many profound politicians, that corruption had spread, and was spreading, its baneful influence among the members of the government of this kingdom; and that the majority cared nothing about maintaining the constitution in its purity, which to them was become like an old song. In this state of things, with Mr. Pitt at their head, and the resources of the British Isles in their hands, it was calculated upon as a certainty that his weight, added to the already powerful confederacy, would soon put a stop to the march of intellect, and, if found necessary, put an extinguisher upon the rights of man.

It is horrible to contemplate the immense destruction of human beings, and the waste of treasure, which followed and supported this superlatively wicked war. Under the mask of patriotism, Mr. Pitt had begun his career, but he soon changed sides, and, blinded perhaps by ambition, became the powerful advocate of an opposite and perverted order of things. Thus situated, nothing could to a certainty serve his purpose so well as corruption; and the House of Commons had long been growing into a state befitting his purpose; for its members had, in a great degree, ceased to be the representatives of the people, and he had now only to begin an invigorated, new, or more extended system of place and patronage to have the majority at his nod; and, in aid of this, to add an extension of the peerage. This demi-oligarchy, cemented together by feelings of rapacious interests, in his hands was the best organised system of extorting money that ever had appeared in the world. They met together to tax—tax—tax; and, under various pretexts, to rob the people "according to law," and to divide the spoil amongst themselves and their friends. Arbitrary laws were enacted, gagging bills were passed, and a system of espionage spread over the kingdom to keep the people down, many of whom seemed to have forgotten the exertions of their forefathers, whose blood had been spilt to purchase a better order of things. I felt particularly hurt at the apathy of country gentlemen in these (politically considered) worst of times. Their faculties seemed benumbed; but, indeed, most of them fell into the vortex of corruption themselves. They appeared to me to have lost their former independent character, and to be now looking out to that evil source as a provision for the younger branches of their own families, unmindful of all other ill consequences, which this selfishness blindly supported and maintained. The minions of power were countenanced and protected, by which they became insolent and impudent, and walked in stately array, hand in hand, in safety. Although the friends of liberty and the constitution were both numerous and intrepid, yet, for want of what they termed respectable heads, they were widely spread and divided, and their efforts proved in vain. There was also an intermediate or neutral race, consisting of those who had not laid down any principle to guide them. They were mostly such as advocated the cause of corruption; and, in listening to them, I was disgusted at their senseless arguments. They were proof against reasoning, and thoroughly convinced me that "a wise man changes his opinion, but a fool never does." They, however, kept on the safe side; *they were loyal;* and the gist of their arguments, with which they ended all their disputes, were summed up in this—"If you do not like your country, leave it. What do you want? are not *we* very well off?" Their reflecting powers reached no further, and they could not see by what slow degrees the arm of despotism had so often circumspectly stretched its iron hand over the liberties of the people, and then crushed them.

While bickerings and debatings were going on amongst politicians at home, the Continent was deluged with the blood of many destructive battles. The sea was also crimsoned in the same way; and it was on this element that the tide of affairs was first turned in favour of Britain, who now, by the valour of her seamen, reigned complete "mistress of the deep," and the commerce of the world seemed to be poured into her lap. Estates rose in value to an extraordinary height, and the price of grain, &c., still more so. The shipping interest wallowed in riches; the gentry whirled about in aristocratic pomposity; they forgot what their demeanour and good, kind, behaviour used to be to those in inferior stations of life; and seemed now far too often to look upon them like dirt. The character of the richer class of farmers was also changed. They acted the gentleman very awkwardly, and many of them could not, in these times, drink anything but wine, and even that was called "humble port." When these upstart gentlemen left the market, they were ready to ride over all they met or overtook on the way; but this was as nothing compared to the pride and folly which took possession of their empty or fume-charged heads, when they got dressed in scarlet. They were then fitted for any purpose, and were called "yeomanry cavalry." Pride and folly then became personified. When peace came, it brought with it a sudden fall in the price of corn; but the taxes continuing the same to them, and rents still keeping high, they, with few exceptions, suddenly experienced a woful change. I cannot say, after seeing so much of their folly, that I was sorry for them; for they mostly deserved this reverse of fortune. Not so with the industrious labourer. His privations were great, and he was undeservedly doomed to suffer for want of employment, and often to waste away and die of hunger and want.

During the greater portion of the war, the land-owners may be said to have paid little or nothing to support it; for the extra rents paid almost all their taxes; but at length the evils brought on by so long a war fell also heavily upon numbers of them, who, on account of tithes and taxes with which the land was loaded, could hardly get any rent at all.

It will seem a wonder to future ages how the British people could so long have supported the squandered expenditure of the government; still they were not like the long-worn-down subjects of continental despots; for what the latter can get from their subjects is like clippings from the back and sides of swine, while the ingenuity, the industry, and the energy of the British people furnish the well-grown fleeces of sheep. Pity it is that they should have been so often wickedly shorn to the bare skin.

This state of temporary prosperity, to which I have alluded, incited to agricultural improvements; and societies for the promotion, and premiums for the encouragement, of various desiderata blazed forth over a great part of the kingdom. Cattle, sheep, horses, and swine, all of which were called "live stock," occupied a great deal of attention, and in the improvement of the various breeds agriculturalists succeeded to a certain, and in some cases, perhaps, to a great extent. And yet I cannot help thinking that they often suffered their whimsies to overshoot the mark, and in many instances to lead them on to the ridiculous.

After all,— these enquiries having opened the eyes of the landlords to their own interests,—it is not unlikely that the man of industry, the plain, plodding farmer will, without receiving any reward, have to pay for these improvements. My kind, my intimate friend, John Bailey, Esq., of Chillingham, in conjunction with another friend of mine, George Culley, Esq., of Fowberry, were the active, judicious, and sensible authors of many of the agricultural reports, in which they did not lose sight of the farmer. They wished to inculcate the principle of "to live and let live" between landlord and tenant.

It will readily be supposed, that, where such exertions were made, and pains taken to breed the best kinds of all the domestic animals, jealousy and envy would be excited, and contentions arise as to which were the best; but for me to dilate upon this would only lead me out of the way. I shall, however, notice an instance, as it happened to occur between my two friends, Mr. Smith, of Woodhall, and Mr. Bailey. The latter, in connection with his report on Cheviot sheep, had given a bad figure of a ram of that breed. This was construed into a design to lessen the character of Mr. Smith's Cheviot sheep, on which, in April, 1798, the latter sent for me to draw and engrave a figure of one of his rams, by way of contrasting it with the figure Mr. Bailey had given. The colour Mr. Smith gave to the business was, not to find fault with Mr. Bailey's figure, but to show how much he (Mr. Smith) had improved the breed since Mr. Bailey had written his report.

Whilst I was at Woodhall, I was struck with the sagacity of a dog belonging to Mr. Smith. The character for sagacity of the Shepherd's Dog was well-known to me, but this instance of it was exemplified before my own eyes. Mr. Smith wished to have a particular ram brought out from amongst the flock, for the purpose of my seeing it. Before we set out, he observed to the shepherd, that he thought the old dog (he was grey-headed and almost blind) would do well enough for what he wanted with him. Before we reached the down, where the flock was feeding, I observed that Mr. Smith was talking to the dog before he ordered him off on his errand; and, while we were conversing on some indifferent subject, the dog brought a ram before us. Mr. Smith found a deal of fault with the dog, saying, Did I not order you so and so? and he scolded him for bringing a wrong sheep, and then, after fresh directions, set him off again to bring the one he wished me to see. We then returned home, and shortly after our arrival there, the dog brought the very ram wanted, along with a few other sheep, into the fold, where I took a drawing of him.

Shortly after my return from Woodhall, I was sent for to Darlington, and thence to Barmpton, to make drawings of cattle and sheep, to be engraved for a Durham report. After I had made my drawings from the fat sheep, I soon saw that they were not approved, but that they were to be made like certain paintings shown to me. I observed to my employer that the paintings bore no resemblance to the animals whose figures I had made my drawings from; and that I would not alter mine to suit the paintings that were shown to me; but, if it were wished that I should make engravings from these paintings, I had not the slightest objection to do so, and I would also endeavour to make *fac similes* of them. This proposal would not do; and my journey, as far as concerned these fat cattle makers, ended in nothing. I objected to put lumps of fat here and there where I could not see it, at least not in so exaggerated a way as on the painting before me; so "I got my labour for my trouble." Many of the animals were, during this *rage* for fat cattle, fed up to as great a weight and bulk as it was possible for feeding to make them; but this was not enough; they were to be figured monstrously fat before the owners of them could be pleased. Painters were found who were quite subservient to this guidance, and nothing else would satisfy. Many of these paintings will mark the times, and, by the exaggerated productions of the artists, serve to be laughed at when the folly and the self-interested motives which gave birth to them are done away.

CHAPTER XVI.

From this time till the peace was concluded, the political debatings, before noticed, continued, and were almost the constant subject of all companies. I have often sat and listened with wonder to the jargon of the protected fools, and heard them argue, if so it may be called, in defence of all the measures then pursued; and I have seen with surprise the impudence of those who lived upon the taxes. Knaves and their abettors appeared to predominate in the land; and they carried their subserviency to such a length that I think, if Mr. Pitt had proposed to make a law to transport all men who had pug noses, and to hang all men above 60 years of age, these persons (those excepted who came within the meaning of the act) would have advocated it as a brilliant thought and a wise measure.

If we examine the history of these times, and look back to those of old, we shall find that the inroads of ignorance have ever been the same. The time was when the magistrates of Newcastle sent to Scotland for a man who was reputed clever in discovering witches. He came, and easily convicted many a fine woman, as well as those who were wrinkled by age and wisdom, and they were by his means tried and put to death.*

I think, if there be a plurality of devils, ignorance must be their king. The wretchedness which ignorance has, from time to time, spread over the world is truly appaling. This is a king that should be deposed without loss of time; and that portion of mankind who are under the guidance of his imps should have nothing to do with the affairs of society, and should be carefully looked to and kept out of every kind of command. Even the poor, innocent, unreasoning animals should, in mercy, not be allowed to be goaded, and to suffer under their ignorance, in the shape of folly and cruelty.

To attempt giving anything like a detail of the history of this eventful war would, in this place, be useless: that must be left to the historian. It appears to me that Mr. Pitt was urged into it chiefly by ambition, and that disappointment broke his heart. General Bonaparte, from his unparalleled victories, became in his turn blinded by ambition, which ended in his being conquered and banished to St. Helena for life. He had divided and conquered almost all his continental enemies, one after another, and then mostly reinstated them in their dominions. But this generosity would not do. Despotism, urged on and supported by this country, was rooted too deeply in the governments of Europe to think of making any change to better the condition of the people. It would appear that that is a business they cannot think of; and the old maxim, that the many are made only to support the few, seems continually uppermost in their resolves. If Bonaparte had been as good a man as he was a great one, he had it in his power to settle all this, and to have established the happiness of both the governors and the governed, over all the civilised world, for ages to come. Although he had the example of the incomparable Washington before him, he did not copy it. He ceased to be first consul, managed to assume the title of emperor, married an Austrian archduchess, and became one of the Legitimates. This added to the stock of his ambition, and from that time he began to decline. Fortune at length seemed to frown upon him, and the frost and snow of Russia cut off and destroyed his immensely large and well-appointed army. He was baffled in his strenuous efforts to repair his loss, and his defeat at Waterloo sealed his ruin.

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* "He was for such like villainie condemned in Scotland, and upon the gallows he confessed he had been the death of two hundred and twenty women, in England and Scotland, for the gain of twenty shillings a-peece, and beseeched forgiveness and was executed."—*England's Grievance, by Ralph Gardner*, 1665.

One would think that the gaining of worlds would not compensate for the misery and the horrid waste of human life which are the certain attendants of war; and one would wonder what kind of minds direct the actions of the authors of it. Were they to reflect, it may be fairly concluded that they could not bear their own thoughts, and that, after taking a full survey of the wretchedness they had occasioned, they would go immediately and hang themselves. They are perhaps not fitted for reflection, or only for that kind of it which can look at nothing but ambition or private gain. It would be well for the abettors and advocates of war to try to weigh the profit and loss (setting aside the inhumanity) attendant upon it. This we should do at home; and, instead of celebrating the birthday of the "Heaven-born minister," ask his admirers how he deserves such a title, and compare it with his actions. Might not the lives of, say, a million of men have been saved? Was it necessary that they should have been sacrificed in such a way? Could he have avoided it? With his consummate abilities, I humbly think he could. Would not these men have been sufficient in number to colonize and to civilize immense unoccupied territories? The money wasted would have accomplished almost anything. The men and the money would have canaled Britain and Ireland from end to end, and intersected them from side to side; and also made piers, where wanted, at the mouths of the rivers of the two islands; and, besides, would have converted both countries into gardens. To point out more improvements would be a waste of words. With such means in hand, they might have been almost endless. Then, per contra:—What has been done in exchange for the millions of lives and the millions of money thus spent? They have restored legitimacy; they have restored "Louis the Desired," and "Ferdinand the Beloved," and the Inquisition! Monarchs are still to be called "God's vicegerents here on earth! When by their actions they shew themselves deserving of such titles, mankind will not disturb them in these their dreams; but, till then, they will continue to smile at the conceit, as well as the glitter they keep up to dazzle the sight of their purblind "loving subjects." All wars, except defensive ones, are detestable; and, if governments admitted morality into their institutions, and were guided by its precepts, war would, in all probability, grow into disuse, and cease. But hitherto that treasure of inestimable value, I think, has been discarded from their councils, and I cannot discover much difference between them and the lesser banditti of old; for each has been guided by the strong disposition to rob, (as soon as they thought themselves able successfully to do so), and to show that "might is right." From the feuds of the nobility down to "Rob-in-hood, Will Scarlet, and Little John;" and from the ferocious combats of the Percy and Douglas, on the Borders—of Johnny Armstrong and his eight score men, down to "Yeddy (Adam) Bell," "Clem of the Clough," and "William of Cloudsley"—and the Mosstroopers,—the same wicked principle has guided them and their ferocious retainers to murder each other and to soak the earth with blood.

CHAPTER XVII.

Without presuming to scan the intentions of Omnipotence, in His gifts to the human race,—or to probe into the nature of His endless works of wisdom,—or to grope into matters intended to be out of our reach, and beyond our comprehension,—yet the reasoning power He has given us, we cannot doubt, was meant to guide us in our researches to the extent for which it is capacitated, and to which its uses are fitted to be applied. In viewing man as connected with this world, and with his station in society, I think it will appear clearly that the various degrees of his intellectual and reasoning powers are the gift of Providence; and, however high this boon may be, the possessor of it ought to be thankful, but never vain. It is this innate power drawn forth and acted upon by observation and industry, that enables the philosopher, the poet, the painter, and the musician, to arrive at excellence; and the same remark is more or less applicable to men bent upon any pursuit in the whole round of the arts and sciences. Without using the means to cultivate their powers, they will remain inert, and be of no use either to the individual or to society; and men with innate qualifications, and men without them, are brought down to a level of uselessness. It is greatly owing to the want of effort that originates the inequalities of rank and fortune of which the community is composed. The intelligent and industrious man, guided by honour, will ever be aiming to rise in the scale of eminence; while, on the contrary, the lazy, the ignorant, or the wicked man, influenced by pride, dissipation and negligence, is whirled into the vortex of disgrace, and is attended by poverty and misery; and, if he cannot redeem his character, becomes abandoned. He is then in his last stage; his days will be full of sorrow; and, if it be true that "none are wretched but the wicked," he will have his fill of it.

But to remedy these evils attendant upon ignorance, as far as possible, and to give every man a fair chance, his reasoning powers ought to be drawn forth by a rational and virtuous education, and it is a first and imperative duty upon the community either to provide for, or to see that it is given to, every one as far as his capacity will permit; for to the neglect or omission of this kind of instruction may be traced almost all the wickedness and misrule which disfigure the social compact and spread misery over the world. To check the reasoning power is a public crime, which, like individual crime, follows the perpetrators like a shadow. To argue against the exercise of this gift is to attempt to thwart the intentions of Omnipotence. It is blasphemy. It never will pollute the tongues of good and wise men, and could only, like dregs, be reserved to defile those of tyrants and fools. Men who are not actuated by the principle of "doing as they would be done by"—governed by a twisted imagination—would have their fellow men kept in ignorance,—to pass away their lives like unreasoning animals, lest they might not have sufficient homage paid to themselves, or that they should forget their duty as servants, and cease to work for, or to wait upon, their employers. A sensible servant will never omit doing his duty, but an ignorant one will; and the reciprocal duties between master and servant ought to be clearly defined. The former ought not to act the tyrant; the latter should be obedient; and equal and just laws should guide and govern them.

All men of sound understanding, and who are capable of reflection, will clearly see that there is not, and cannot be, any such thing as equality. There must, and ever will be, high and low, rich and poor; and this inequality of rank and fortune, in civilized states, is necessary for the comfort and happiness of all. A cement is thus formed, which binds together in union the strength, the beauty, and the symmetry of the whole. In the freest state, man must not expect to have the unrestrained liberty of the savage, but must give up a part of his own freedom for the good of the whole; for liberty consists in this, that every man may do whatever he pleases, provided he does nothing to injure his neighbour, or the community of which he is a member; and his morality ought to be guided by the golden rule, of "doing unto all men as he would they should do unto him." Were men made sensible of the rectitude of this order of things; were they to consider that, in whatever station in society fortune may have placed them, it is the will of Providence that it should be so, this reflection would greatly contribute to their peace of mind and contentment; for no man should think himself degraded by following an honest calling.

> "Honour and shame from no condition rise;
> Act well your part: there all the honour lies."

Patriotism ought to direct every man to do honour to himself and to his country; and it is in this that great national power principally consists. It is also by the good conduct, and consequent character, of the great mass of the people that a nation is exalted. The crown—the richest diamond of our life—is the love of our country; and the man who neglects this, and ceases to reverence and adore his Maker, is good for nothing. "The country, surrounded by the briny deep, where all our ancestors lie buried—in which from youth upwards we have felt the benefit of equal laws, first acted upon and handed down to us by the Great Alfred, and maintained from time to time amidst all the attempts of despotism to overturn them, —by men famed for matchless wisdom and virtue,—a country so renowned as England, so famous for all that most strongly attracts the admiration of men,—a country whose genius and power have, for ages, been such as to make her views and intentions an object of solicitude with every nation, and with every enlightened individual in the world,—a country famed for her laws, famed in arts and arms, famed for the struggles which, age after age, her sons have held with tyranny in every form it has assumed,—and, beyond all these, famed for having given birth to, and reared to manhood, those men of matchless wisdom and virtue whose memories will be held up to admiration, and whose example will be followed in ages to come—who have rendered the very name of Englishmen respected in every civilized country in the world"—(may this be eternal!)—should this country ever sink into despotism, its reputation will sink also, and with it the high name of its once enlightened sons; for this renown and this exalted station cannot be stable unless a pure representation of the people is kept up: without that, justice will be perverted, and corruption will creep in and in time overturn the best and wisest plans. Government will become omnipotent, instead of being the umpire and standing by, like a strong man, to see that justice is done. Lord Bacon says:—"The ultimate object which legislators ought to have in view, and to which all their enactments and sanctions ought to be subservient, is, that the citizens may live happy. For this purpose it is necessary that they should receive a religious and pious education; that they should be trained to good morals; that they should be secured from foreign enemies by proper military arrangements; that they should be guarded by an effectual police against seditions and private injuries; that they should be loyal to government, and obedient to magistrates; and, finally, that they should abound in wealth, and other national resources."

Well constituted governments, if occasionally revised, and as often as necessary scrupulously amended, may be rendered as permanent as time. If wisely and virtuously administered, they would be indestructible, and incalculably contribute, by their vigour and uninterrupted duration, to the mental and moral aggrandisement of man. It is a truth confirmed by universal history, that the happiness or misery of a people almost entirely depend upon the principles of their government, and the conduct of their rulers. Where just and honourable intentions exist, there is nothing to dread; but, when only the semblance of these are put on, to cloak wicked and sinister ends, delusion and artifice of every kind must be resorted to for their accomplishment. Thence follows the degradation of man, and the consequent decay of states and nations. But it is not for want of knowing better that governments get out of the path of rectitude; it is by the individuals who compose its parts becoming dishonest. To the sage advice of such men as Bacon and Locke they turn a deaf ear; they are lost in considerations about their own private, selfish concerns, or are blinded by a false ambition, regardless of promoting the public good, or the happiness of mankind; and, until they are checked in this career, by an enlightened people, it is in vain to look for any amendment in them. But the great bulk of the people must be enlightened and amended, before liberty, peace, and happiness, can be spread over the world.

The first step preparatory to this desirable order of things, must be that the people should learn to respect themselves, as reasoning beings, which is the noblest privilege bestowed upon them by the Creator. To slight this gift is to act ungratefully to the Giver; for it is only by the free exercise of their understandings that men can see the face of truth, or can have the full use of all the means of advancing in knowledge, or are capable of religion, science, virtue, and rational happiness, or can be enabled to look backward with comfort or forward with hope. It is a sure sign that all is not right, or as it should be, in governments, when they fear even the fullest investigation of any, and of every, subject. Truth and honesty fear no discussion, and good governments will freely encourage, instead of checking, them. There ought to be no libels, but falsehoods. Can any man say, in the face of the world, that truth ought not to prevail? It is owing to inquisitorial checks and restraints, that two of the most important concerns to mankind, Religion and Politics,—on which their happiness, and everything of importance to them, so much depends,—is by the community, as a whole, so imperfectly understood, and so blindly acted upon at this day. It is only by seeing the conduct of public men in a clear light, that a just judgment can be formed of them and their measures, and of their fitness or unfitness to conduct the important concerns entrusted to their control. It may, indeed, be feared that, if tried in the balance, they will be found very light. Wise and honest councils must be resorted to and adopted before Religion, Morality, and Politics, Arts and Sciences, and a better knowledge of this world of wonders, can be developed and appreciated. Till then no amendment need be expected: religion will not be freed from superstition and bigotry, nor political institutions purged from venality and corruption, and conducted by honesty and good sense. Those who have fixed themselves, like a disease, upon the body politic should have warning to depart.

In glancing back upon the transactions of the world, as they have recently passed in review before us, how can it afford any matter of wonder that the advocates of liberty should have entertained fears for its safety, and have wished, as a check, the re-establishment of the British constitution in its purity. There was, indeed, little hope of this being acted upon, when foreign despots were leagued to enslave their peoples; and our own government, supported by a demi-oligarchy, was so deeply connected with them. Loan after loan was wrung from the British people under various pretexts, but in reality to support despotism under the disguise of legitimacy. Granted, that an honest House of Commons might have supported legitimacy, they should have openly expressed disapprobation at the lost liberties of nations of enslaved people. Protests of this kind, however, did not fit with the notions of the representatives of boroughmongers, who composed the majority of the honourable House, and who had long been used to treat the people and their petitions with unblushing neglect or contempt.

In this state of things, politics ran high; an unpleasant ferment soured the minds of a great majority of the people; and it cannot be wondered that they were, with difficulty, kept within bounds. Those who had been used to batten on the wages of corruption became excessively alarmed, and, under the pretence of preserving the constitution, resorted to a system of espionage, and of gaols and bastiles, and left no stone unturned to throw odium upon their opponents, the advocates of liberty, who were branded with the nicknames of Jacobins, Levellers, Radicals, &c., &c. The pen of literature was prostituted to overshade the actions of good men, and to gloss-over the enormities of the base. The energies of many members of both Houses of Parliament were unavailing against this compact confederacy of undeserving placemen and pensioners, who were bound together by fellow feelings of self-interest, in which all ideas of public trust were lost in private considerations. They had sinned themselves out of all shame. This phalanx have kept their ground, and will do so till, it is to be feared, violence from an enraged people breaks them up, or, perhaps, till the growing opinions against such a crooked order of conducting the affairs of this great nation becomes quite apparent to an immense majority, whose frowns may have the power of bringing the agents of government to pause upon the brink of the precipice on which they stand, and to provide in time, by wise and honest measures, to avert the coming storm. It is appalling to think of matters of this import being brought to extremities, especially when the whole might so easily be settled without any convulsion at all. The king (whose interests are the same as the people's), if freed from the advice of evil counsellors, and from the unfitting trammels by which they have him bound, might insist upon having the constitution restored to its purity. This would at once settle the business, and would cause him to be adored by his whole people, and his name to be revered, by the enlightened in every civilised country, to the latest posterity.

CHAPTER XVIII.

I NEVER could agree in opinion with the philanthropic, and well-intentioned, and honest, Major Cartwright,* in his unqualified scheme of universal suffrage; because I conceive that the ignorant and the wicked ought to be debarred from voting for anything; they should neither be honoured with privileges nor employed in any office of public trust; a virtual representation is all-sufficient for them. Could matters be so managed that none but sensible, honest men should be allowed to vote, either for members of Parliament, or for any other public functionary, the country would, in a short time, put on a very improved appearance. It is quite natural to suppose that, were elections entrusted to this description of men, they would elect none but those of similar character to their own. But, should it be found impracticable thus to order public affairs, then the next best plan,—and which might easily be accomplished,—would be to confer the additional elective franchise upon householders of probity and honour, —that is, upon those who, in their own spheres, by industry and intelligence, maintain themselves respectably; for it must be admitted that the poor are frequently as wise as the rich, and as remarkable for integrity.

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* Major Cartwright, died 23rd Sep., 1824, aged 84,—an honour to his country and to human nature—an upright and inflexible patriot.

If an overwhelming mass of selfism did not paralyze every improvement, how easily and how soon all this might be done. By making elections simple, candidates would be spared the expense of a canvass, and drunkenness and the base, wicked effects consequent thereon might be avoided. This business through the whole kingdom might be done in a few days, by summoning the electors (as soon as the candidates were nominated) to attend at the several polling places, to vote by ballot or otherwise as might be determined. The public should only be addressed through the medium of the newspapers. What a real honour would it be to be thus elected! What a saving of expense! What can any gentleman, after spending thousands in the present mode, say for himself? Does he expect to be repaid, somehow or other, by the nation? or, has he lavished away such sums for the "honour of the thing," and thus robbed his own family by wasteful expenditure?

While sentiments of patriotism were entertained in our country,—clouded, indeed, by fears of an opposite tendency, as noticed before,—the attention of all was drawn aside to view the confederacy of despots directed to shackle the understandings of mankind, and to keep them in slavery and degradation, Would any man in his senses, in the present enlightened state of the civilized world, have thought this possible? And yet, as a finish, they have called it the "Holy Alliance." My most fervent prayer is, that no king of the British Isles will ever keep such company; but that our sovereigns will ever stand firm, uncontaminated by the infectious effluvia of arbitrary power, upon this proud ground—this soil fitly tilled, but only wanting some weeding to render it perfectly ready to produce a rich crop of liberty.

Most men were beginning to hope that emperors and kings had discovered that, if the people were not enlightened, it was high time for them to use their kingly influence to make them so; and that it is far safer and better, as well as more honourable, to preside over an intelligent people, than to govern men brought down to the level of unreasoning brutes. The wretchedly bigoted, and consequently oppressed, people of Spain will, no doubt, see things in their true light at some future day, and free their fine country from misrule. The times in which Galileo lived have passed away, but we still see the same kind of despotism and superstition ready as ever to burn such men alive, and to strew their ashes in the wind. The affairs of mankind, managed in this way, will be likely at no distant period to put such kings and their priests out of fashion. Superstition makes despots and tyrants of all the sovereigns whom it influences: they become the confirmed enemies of knowledge. The die is then cast. Superstition never did, nor ever will, listen to reason; for credulity is the offspring of ignorance, and superstition is the child of credulity; and this breed is nursed and kept up by despotism, as its mainstay and darling. The sun of reason may be clouded for a time. As long as falsehood in the garb of truth continues to lead the great mass of mankind, so long will they struggle in vain to attain the paths which lead to perfection and happiness.

"We should always repute it as our business in the world—the end and purpose of our being—our duty to our kind—the natural use of the powers we enjoy—and the suitable testimony of gratitude to our Maker, to contribute something to the general good—to the common fund of happiness to our species."* Benevolent and patriotic sentiments of this kind ought always to be kept up, and the mite of the humblest individual ought to be received and acknowledged: the reveries of such ought not to pass without being coolly examined by men of experience. I well remember my name having been set down as that of a person who would, without hesitation, become a member of a society in Newcastle, "for the suppression of vice." To this I decidedly objected, and told my well-meaning neighbour,† who named the matter to me, that I thought the magistrates were quite competent to manage that business; but that I would have no hesitation in joining their society if they would change their plan, and make it "a society for promoting and rewarding virtue." I have often thought since that, if such a society as the latter—to be called

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* Dr. F. Hutchinson.

† Mr. Benjamin Brunton. He was a popular man, and was often chairman at patriotic and charitable metin gs, and had been one of the committee who sued the magistrate of Newcastle on the Town Moor business before mentioned.

"The Society of Honour"—were established in every parish, it might, if well managed, do great good. The society ought not to annoy any one, by being over officious, nor to meddle otherwise than by quietly, and yet publicly, rewarding, or expressing the good opinion they entertain of the conduct of the person honoured.

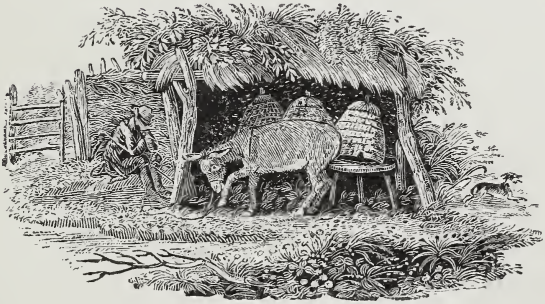
Another society of a very different character to the last-named is at this time winked at in this land of liberty. I mean the present great and mighty Inquisition, held under the denomination of "the Constitutional Association." These men—the secret admirers of "The Holy Alliance"—may more properly be called the suppressors and dreaders of truth. Acting, indeed, under the mask of advocating the cause of religion and liberty, but in reality in lurking enmity to the latter, and to all free enquiry and investigation, they have arrogated to themselves the power of punishing a man for his unbiased opinions, even on subjects which do not militate against good morals, or against the happiness of society; thus taking the power out of the hands of the national authorities, as if they were unfit and insufficient to do their duty. A House of Commons ought to see this with indignation, and this self-erected Inquisition, instead of ruining parties by their prosecutions, should be invited to answer truth with truth, as well as they can; leaving the world to judge how it stands between them and their opponents.

When men break through laws, made with care for the good government of the community, they ought, as at present, to forfeit their liberty, and in some cases their lives. It is a pity that those who have betrayed the innocent, and robbed the fatherless children and widows, cannot be sent to live with savages, and to have their backs tatooed with hieroglyphics, expressive of their crimes.

It has often been a matter of surprise, in the circle of my friends, that criminals are not transported to the West Indies, there to undergo a purgation till they have redeemed their characters, in which case they should be allowed to return home. It has also appeared to us that the law is defective, in not, somehow or other, protecting such men after being released from prison. Some association should be formed—some friends to them and to humanity might be invited forth to pass their word, for a time, for their good behaviour, to prevent their being thus cast friendless upon an unforgiving and censorious world; for it matters not how fervently a man may wish to redeem his character, no one will employ him, and he is thereby driven to the necessity of flying to some villainous scheme to enable him to live.

It is painful to speak about punishments to be inflicted upon one's unfortunate fellow men: it is equally so to contemplate their self-degradation. But, when it is considered what a voluminous mass of laws we have, neither understood nor explained, we cannot wonder that they are broken; they are so multifarious and complex, that, as to the illiterate description of persons they are meant to keep in order, they are almost useless. An abridgement of the laws of England would perhaps fill fifty folio volumes. These laws, at the time they were made, might be good and proper, but most of them are now inapplicable and obsolete. To amend them seems impossible, and an act to amend or explain an act, by adding confusion to confusion, is truly farcical. It is a pity that the whole of them cannot be abolished at once, and short and clear new ones substituted in their stead. As they stand at present, few men can understand them, and to men of plain, good sense, or of ordinary capacities, they appear altogether a great mass of unintelligible matter, or a complete "riddle-me-ree." This may, indeed, be intended or winked at; for it gives employment to a great number of men of the law, of all kinds of character, from the basest up to others who are ornaments to their country. Indeed, were it not for the latter description, the rest would not be endurable. They are more to be dreaded than highwaymen and housebreakers, and as such are viewed by the thinking part of the community; but the former find employment from clients of their own character, who trust to them for their ability in twisting, evading, and explaining the law away.

In passing through life, it has fortunately been my lot to have been intimate with both military and naval gentlemen, as well as with those of the learned professions; and, though several of each class have stood high in the estimation of the world, for their gentlemanly manners and unsullied worth—to which I may be allowed to add my testimony, as well as to acknowledge the debt of gratitude I owe some of them for their kindness and attention —yet, on taking a comparative survey of the whole, I cannot help giving a preference to medical men; for, besides their learning and attainments in common with other professions, they appear to me, generally, to be further removed from prejudice, more enlightened, and more liberal in their sentiments than the other labourers in the vineyards of science and literature.



CHAPTER XIX.

It is of the utmost importance to individuals and to society that attention should be watchfully bestowed upon children, both with respect to their health and their morals. Their future welfare in life depends upon this, and the important charge falls greatly upon the mother. Her first lesson—their talent being only imitation—should be that of obedience, mildly enforced; for, reason being the faculty of comparing ideas already presented to the mind, it cannot exist in a child, to whom few or no ideas have been presented. Then follow lessons of truth, sincerity, industry, honesty. It ought to be impressed upon their minds that, though they are young, yet the longest life is only like a dream; and, short as it is, it is rendered shorter by all the time lost in wickedness, contention, and strife. They ought to be taught that all they can do, while they sojourn in this world, is to live honourably, and to take every care that the soul shall return to the Being who gave it as pure, unpolluted, and spotless as possible; and that there can be no happiness in this life, unless they hold converse with God.

With respect to the health of children, I fear the present management is not right. The mistaken indulgence of parents, in pampering and spoiling the appetites of children, lays the foundation of a permanent train of diseases, which an endless supply of medicines and nostrums will never restore to its pristine vigour. Skilful medical aid may, indeed, be of use, but nothing is so sure as a recurrence to a plain diet, temperance, and exercise. The next obstacle to remedy, I fear, will not be easily removed ; for it is built upon the prejudices of mothers themselves, dictated by notions of fashion and gentility which have taken a deep root. When folly has given the fashion, she is a persevering dame, and "folly ever dotes upon her darling." Instead of impressing upon the minds of girls the importance of knowing household affairs, and other useful knowledge, and cultivating cheerfulness and affability along with the courtesies of life, they must undergo a training to befit them for appearing in frivolous company. To insure this, the mother, or some boarding school mistress, insists that these delicate young creatures be tightened up in a shape-destroying dress, and sit and move in graceful stiffness. They must not spring about or make use of their limbs, lest it might be called *romping,* and might give them so vulgar, so robust, and so red-cheeked a look that they would not appear *like ladies.* The consequence of this is, that they become like hot-house plants ;—the air must not blow upon them ;—and, in this state, they must attend routs and balls, and midnight assemblies, which send numbers of them to an untimely grave.* If they survive these trials, still they leave behind a want of health and vigour, which hangs upon them through life, and they become the nerveless outcasts of nature. They are then unfit to become the mothers of Englishmen; they twine out a life of *ennui*, and their generation dies out. I have all my life been grieved to find this description too often realized. It is paying too dear for female accomplishments. It is surely desirable that a change should take place, by which fashionable follies may be narrowed in their boundaries, and a better line drawn out; prescribed by propriety, affability, modesty, and good sense, on which the courtesies of life, and the invaluable embellishments of civilisation, and everything graceful and charming in society, is founded. I wish the ladies of the British Isles may set the example, and take the lead in this, so that ignorant rudeness and vulgarity may be banished from the face of the earth.

If I could influence the fair sex, there is one thing to which I would draw their attention; and that is Horticulture; and, connected with this, I would recommend them, as far as convenient, to become Florists, as this delightful and healthy employment,—which has been long enough in the rude hands of men—would entice them into the open air, stimulate them to exertion, and draw them away from their sedentary mode of life, mewed up in close rooms, where they are confined like nuns. This would contribute greatly to their amusement, and exhilarate their spirits. Every sensible man should encourage the fair sex to follow this pursuit. What would this world be without their help, to alleviate its burdens? It would appear a barren waste. It would no longer be a wide-spread garden of Eden, nor an earthly paradise within the reach of our enjoyments. May the fruits and flowers of it, reared and presented by their fair hands, ever operate as a charm in ensuring the attentions and unabating regard of all men! And of all good men it will. In thus dictating to them, no embarrassment can follow; and, if they ever know of the liberty I thus have taken, it will probably be when all embarrassments are, with me, at an end. And I can only further leave behind me a wish that health may eternally blush their cheeks, and virtue their minds.

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* If these assemblies must be kept up—by the gentry who can afford it—they ought to be held in the day time, that those who attend them may get their natural rest at night.

Next in consideration to the ladies,—who they must in courtesy follow,—are the freeholders of this favoured land. Such of these as, by their attainments, arrive at the degree of gentlemen, are, or ought to be, the pride and glory of every civilised country in the world. Placed in opulence and independence, they are, and must be looked up to as, the patrons of every virtue in the people, who, in their station of life, may need such help to encourage them. May gentlemen never lose sight of this important duty, and ever be able to stem the torrent of gambling and dissipation; so that their ancient mansions may remain in their names for ever, as pledges of their worth, and as ornaments to the country. Without their countenance, arts and sciences, and artisans, would languish, industry would be paralized, and barbarism again rear its benumbed hands and stupid head. It is to be hoped that the business of their wine vaults, their horses, and their dogs, may cease to be the main business of their lives, and only be looked to as matters of amusement wherewith to unbend their minds. And, as no man can, while he is in possession of his faculties, rest in happiness unless he is exercising them, and some hobby-horse must engage his attention, it therefore becomes a question for their consideration in what way they can best employ themselves. I would earnestly recommend that gentlemen should endeavour to improve their lands, and lay the foundation of fertilising them: and instead of spending—perhaps squandering—their money in follies abroad, as far as possible, spend it at home. The late good and wise first Lord Ravensworth used to say, there was nothing grateful but the earth. "You cannot," said he, "do too much for it; it will continue to pay tenfold the pains and labour bestowed upon it." Estates so managed would then exhibit the appearance of clean-weeded nurseries. As an act of justice due to the industrious farmer, he ought, on entering upon his lease, to have his farm valued, and, when his lease is out, valued again; and, whatever improvements he may have made, ought to be paid for on his leaving. I am well aware that these remarks may not be relished by those whose pride, dictated by the wish to domineer, will not give in to this fair proposal, for fear of the independent spirit it might rear; but it must be allowed that the landlord could come to no loss by it, and that the community would be greatly benefited by the adoption of such a plan. Those gentlemen who have moor lands, however exposed and bleak they may be, may yet do something to make them more productive, by enclosing them with dry stone dykes, beset and bound with ivy, and intersected with whin hedges;* and this shelter would form a bield for sheep and cattle, and besides would produce grass both in quantity and quality such as never grew there before.

The chief offices which gentlemen and freeholders are called upon to fulfil are, member of Parliament, magistrate, and juryman. The first is the most important; but, indeed, in that as well as the others, the requisite ingredients are honesty and intelligence. If we look at the wretched tools which boroughmongers obtrude upon the nation, we may anxiously look to the importance of electing gentlemen who will unceasingly and boldly oppose such men ever being allowed to sit as representatives. But these have already gone far on the road towards paralysing the British constitution, and establishing on its ruins an oligarchy, which is the worst and most odious of all governments.

In the troublesome and gratuitous office of magistrate, great sagacity and penetration are requisite to enable the holders, in their political capacity, to discriminate between stretching too far the, perhaps, ill-defined, and often arbitrary laws, beyond the due bounds prescribed by justice and mercy. They ought to detest being made the tools of despotic acts of corruption, and being like Turkish Bashaws spread over the provinces. In their civil capacities, matters come more nearly home to them; and in this they have much need of cool deliberation, as well as extreme vigilence, for without these there would be no such thing as living in peace while such numbers of the dregs of the people remain in ignorance and depravity. These latter do not know the meaning of either religion or morality, and it is only the strong arm of the law that can keep people of this description in order. Their evidence ought always to be suspected. Oaths have little weight: they are so used to them. One of our poets says,—

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* The very clippings of which (as noticed before) would be healthful fodder for both sheep and cattle.

"Of all the nauseous complicated crimes
"Which both infest and stigmatise the times,
"There's none which can with impious oaths compare,
"Where vice and folly have an equal share."

But, bad as these reprobate oaths are, there are others which I think are still worse; and these are the numerous oaths used, and indeed imposed, on so many and on such improper occasions, where Omnipotence is impiously appealed to in all the little dirty transactions between man and man. It would be well to remember that an honest man's word is as good as his oath,—and so is a rogue's too. Surely some remedy might be fallen upon to check these swearing vices; especially perjury, bearing false witness, as well as when a man is proved to have broken his word and his honour.

There is another vice, of an odious complexion, advancing with rapid strides to enormity, which cries aloud to be checked. Bad men, with hardened effrontery, only laugh at their breaking down every barrier to modesty and virtue, and thus disrobing innocence, and rendering deformed that which ought to be the brightest feature of civilisation. The crime to which I allude needs only to be examined to convince any one of its cruelty to the fair sex, and its extensively demoralising influence on society. Let any man ask himself how he would feel were his daughter or his sister to be betrayed. This question ought to be fairly canvassed. Although it will be allowed that men, devoid of honour and modesty, who have let loose their unbridled, bad passions, will not be easily stopped in their career, yet, notwithstanding, this evil may be, by the strong arm of the law, greatly banished from the land, and innate modesty planted in its stead.

All men and women in health, and of good character, ought to be countenanced in marrying; and it is for them to consider whether they can properly rear and educate a family; and, should there be an over-abundant population, then colonisation might be resorted to at the public expense; and this globe will be found large enough to hold additional millions upon millions of people. There are few contracts between human beings which should be more delicate than that of marriage. It is an engagement of the utmost importance to individuals and to society, and which of all others ought to be the most unbiassed; for it cannot be attended with honour, nor blessed with happiness, if it has not its origin in mutual affection. The rules to be observed in thus selecting and fixing the choice are few, simple, and easily understood. Both males and females, if of unsound constitution, ought to forbear matrimony. It is the duty of every man to endeavour to get a healthy woman for the sake of his children, and an amiable one for his own domestic comfort. The fair sex should observe the like rules. If a woman marries a man who has broken down his constitution by his own dissipation, or has imbibed a tainted one from his parents, she must not be surprised at becoming a nurse to him and his nerveless, puny, offspring. One cannot help wondering at the uncommon pains a gentleman will take in buying a horse, to see that the animal is perfectly sound, and without blemish, and that he should not take the same pains in choosing a wife, which is of infinitely more importance to him. He, perhaps to repair his shattered fortune, will marry any woman if she has plenty of money. She may, indeed, be the innocent heir to the full-charged hereditary diseases of a pair of voluptuous citizens, just as that may happen to be. No gentleman need to look far from his home, to be enabled to meet with an helpmate, possessing every requisite to make him happy; but, if he cannot meet with such a one, or cannot please himself in his own neighbourhood, he had better travel in search of one from Land's End to John o' Groat's House, than not get a proper partner as the mother of his children.

I have often thought that the children of gentlemen—boys particularly—are too soon put to school under improper restraints, and harassed with education before their minds are fit for it. Were they sent to the edge of some moor, to scamper about amongst whins and heather, under the care of some good old man—some mentor—who would teach them a little every day, without embarrassing them—they would there, in this kind of preparatory school, lay in a foundation of health, as well as education. If they were thus allowed to run wild by the sides of burns—to fish, to wade, and to splash in—they would soon find their minds intently employed in sports and pleasures of their own choosing. It would be found that youth so brought up, besides thus working out any little hereditary ailments, would never forget the charms of the country, which would impart to them a flow of spirits through life such as very few, or none, brought up in a town ever know, and, besides this, lay in a strong frame work on which to build a nervous constitution, befitting the habitation of an energetic mind and a great soul. Let any one look at the contrast between men thus brought up, and the generality of early-matured Lilliputian plants, and he will soon see, with very few exceptions, the difference, both in body and mind, between them.

CHAPTER XX.

The game laws have for ages past been a miserable source of contention between those rendered unqualified by severe and even cruel game laws, and parties who had influence to get these laws enacted for their own exclusive privilege of killing the game. To convince the intelligent poor man that the fowls of the air were created only for the rich is impossible, and will for ever remain so. If it be pleaded that, because the game are fed on the lands of the latter, they have the exclusive right to them, this would appear to be carrying the notions of the sacredness of property too far; for even this ought to have its bounds; but were this conceded, as property is enjoyed by a rental, and as the farmers feed the game, they would appear to belong to them more properly than to any one else. I own I feel great repugnance in saying anything that might have a tendency to curtail the healthy enjoyments of the country gentleman, in his field sports, which his fortune and his leisure enable him so appropriately to pursue; at the same time it is greatly to be regretted that anything—any overstretched distinctions—should ever happen to make a breach between the poor and the rich. It is, however, to be wished that the unqualified man may find his attention engaged, and his mind excited in some other way (or by his business) than that of becoming a poacher. The strange propensity, however unaccountable, in almost all men TO KILL, and the pleasurable excitement to do so, is equally strong in the poacher as in the gentleman sportsman. This excitement, or an extreme desire to exhilarate the spirits, and to give them energy, as well as pleasure, pervades more or less, the minds of all mankind, and shows itself in every species of gambling, from cock-fighting, dog and man fighting, hunting, horse-racing, and even up to the acme of excitement—or excitement run mad—that of horrid war. I wish something more rational and better could be contrived to whet the mind and to rouse its energies; for certain it is that "the heart that never tastes pleasure shuts up, grows stiff, and incapable of enjoyment." The minds of men ought therefore, to be unbent at certain times,—especially in some constitutions,—to prevent their becoming nerveless and hypochondriacal, the worst of all diseases, in which the mind sees everything with an obliquity of intellect, and creates numberless cruel and imaginary evils which continually surround and embarras it. Only let a man who cannot employ himself with some hobby or other know that he is provided for, and has nothing to do, and it will soon be seen how *ennui*, with benumbing steps, will thrust itself upon him, and what a stupid and unhappy being he is.

If I have reasoned correctly in the foregoing observations, it is, then, desirable that sports and pastimes should be resorted to that might, in many cases, turn out to public good. For this purpose, I have often thought that small sums might be subscribed and collected to be given as a prize to the best shot at a mark. The utility and national purpose of this scheme may at some time be felt; for, so long as surrounding despots can gather together immense mercenary armies, they ought to be effectually guarded against, and they certainly might be as effectually checked by hundreds of thousands of riflemen, (including the militia), thus trained for the defence of the kingdom, at a comparatively small expense. They might have their bullets made of baked clay, which would probably be as efficient as those made of lead, and cost almost nothing.

The last subject I shall notice, as being kept up by unequal and unjust laws, is the fisheries, throughout the kingdom. The laws made respecting them originated in the times of feudal tyranny, when "might was right," and everything was carried with a high hand. It was then easy for an overbearing aristocracy, by their influence, to get grants and charters made entirely on their own behalf. The rights of the community were set at nought, or were treated with contempt. But those days are passed away; the march of intellect is spreading over the world; and all public matters are now viewed with feelings of a very different kind than when such laws were made, and which ought to have been repealed long since; but they are still in force, and will continue so as long as the potent feelings of overstretched self-interest are allowed to guide those who have the power to keep the grasp of this their antiquated hold: for such can hear no reason against their private interest, however unanswerable it may be. No reasonable plea can ever be set up, to show that the fish of rivers ought to be the private property of any one. Can it be pretended that because a river or a rivulet, passes through an estate, whether the owner of it will or not, that the fish which breed in it, or which live in it, ought to be his? They are not like the game, which are all fed by the farmer, for fish cost nobody anything; therefore, in common justice, they ought to belong to the public, and ought to be preserved for the public good, in every county through which the rivers pass, and be let at a rental from the clerk of the peace, and the money arising therefrom applied to making bridges and roads, or for county or other rates. Stewards ought to be appointed to receive the rents, and a committee of auditors elected annually, by ballot, as a check upon the management of the whole. If the fisheries were not thus rented, the public would derive little benefit from such an immense supply of food; for without they were thus disposed of each county would soon be over-run with such numbers of poachers as would become intolerable. All this, however, ought to be well considered; for, notwithstanding the selfish principle which dictated the original grants of the fisheries,—long since obtained,—the present possessors are not to blame, and suddenly to deprive any man of what he has been accustomed to receive may be deemed a harsh measure, and in some cases a cruel one; therefore some equitable sum should be paid to the owners at once, as a remuneration in lieu of all future claims; as fish ought not to be considered as an inheritance to descend to the heirs of any one.

From about the year 1760 to '67, when a boy, I was frequently sent by my parents to purchase a salmon from the fishers of the "strike" at Eltringham ford. At that time, I never paid more, and often less, than three halfpence per pound (mostly a heavy, guessed weight, about which they were not exact). Before, or perhaps about this time, there had always been an article inserted in every indenture in Newcastle, that the apprentice was not to be obliged to eat salmon above twice a week, and the like bargain was made upon hiring ordinary servants. It need not be added that the *salmo* tribe then teemed in abundance in the Tyne, and there can be little doubt that the same immense numbers would return to it again were proper measures pursued to facilitate their passage from the sea to breed. All animals, excepting fish, only increase, but they multiply, and that in so extraordinary a degree as to set all calculation at defiance. It is well known that they ascend every river, rivulet, and burn, in search of proper places to deposit their spawn; and this is the case both with those kinds which quit the sea, and those which never leave the fresh water. In their thus instinctively searching for proper spawning places, they make their way up to such shallows as one would think it impossible for any animal wanting legs and feet ever to crawl up to; therefore every improper weir or dam that obstructs their free passage ought to be thrown down, as they are one great cause of the salmon quitting the proper spawning places in the river, to return to spawn in the sea as well as they can; where, it is fair to conclude, their fry, or their roe, are swallowed up by other fish, as soon as they, or it, are spread abroad along the shores.

It will readily be perceived, that the fishers' weirs are made chiefly with a view of preventing their neighbour fishers from coming in for their due share; but, were the fisheries let, as before named, the different fishing places would then be planned out by the stewards, as well as remedying other faults with an impartial hand. There are, besides weirs and dams, other causes which occasion the falling off of the breed of salmon, by greatly preventing them from entering and making their way up rivers for the purpose of spawning. They have a great aversion to passing through impure water, and even snow-water stops them; for they will lie still, and wait until it runs off. The filth of manufactories is also very injurious, as well as the refuse which is washed off the uncleaned streets of large towns by heavy rains. Were this filth in all cases led away and laid on the land, it would be of great value to the farmer, and persons should be appointed to do that duty, not in a slovenly or lazy manner, but with punctuality and despatch. In this the health and comfort of the inhabitants of towns ought to be considered as of great importance to them, as well as that of keeping the river as pure as possible on account of the fish.

Should the evils attendant upon weirs and dams, and other matters, be rectified, then the next necessary step to be taken should be the appointment of river conservators and vigilant guards to protect the kipper, or spawning fish, from being killed while they are in this sickly and imbecile state. They are then so easily caught, that, notwithstanding they are very unwholesome as food, very great numbers are taken in the night, which are eaten by poor people, who do not know how pernicious they are. But, should all these measures be found not fully to answer public expectation, the time now allowed for fishing might be shortened, and in some years, if ever found necessary, the fishing might be laid in for a season.

The next important question for consideration, is respecting what can be done to prevent the destruction of salmon on their first entering a river, and while they are in full perfection, by their most powerful and most conspicuously destructive enemy, the porpoise.

I have seen a shoal of porpoises, off Tynemouth, swimming abreast of each other, and thus occupying a space of apparently more than a hundred yards from the shore, seawards, and crossing the mouth of the river, so that no salmon could enter it. They went backward and forward for more than a mile, along shore, and with such surprising rapidity that, in their course, they caused a foam to arise, like the breakers of the sea in a storm. Might not a couple of steam packets, with strong nets, sweep on shore hundreds of these at a time? Perhaps by giving premiums for catching them they might be greatly thinned, and their tough skins be tanned, or otherwise prepared, so as to be applied to some use. Oil might be obtained partly to pay for the trouble of taking this kind of fish; and, lastly, they might be used as an article of food. They were eaten formerly even by the gentry: and why not make the attempt to apply them to that purpose again? Perhaps, by pickling or drying them, and by other aids of cookery, they might prove good and wholesome; for every animal in season is so, which, when out of season, is quite the reverse.

If the parent fishes of the *salmo* tribe were protected, the fry would soon be seen to swarm in incredible numbers, and perhaps a pair of them would spawn more than all the anglers from the source to the mouth of any river could fairly catch in one season. Having from a boy been an angler, it is with feelings painfully rankling in my mind that I live in dread (from hints already given) of this recreation being abridged or stopped. Angling has from time immemorial been followed, and ought to be indulged in unchecked by arbitrary laws, as the birthright of everyone, but particularly of the sedentary and the studious. It is cruel to think of debarring the fair angler, by any checks whatever; the salmon fishers may, indeed, begrudge to see such fill his creel with a few scores of the fry; because what is taken might in a short time return to them as full-grown salmon (for all fish, as well as birds, return to the same places where they were bred); but, for reasons before-named, this selfishness should not be attended to for a moment, and the fisheries ought to be taken subject to this kind of toll or imaginary grievance.

I have always felt extremely disgusted at what is called preserved waters (except fish ponds); that is, where the fish in these waters are claimed exclusively as private property. The disposition which sets up claims of this kind is the same as would—if it could—sell the sea, and the use of the sun and the rain. Here the angler is debarred by the surly, selfish owner of the adjoining land, the pleasure of enjoying the most healthful and comparatively the most innocent of all diversions. It unbends the minds of the sedentary and the studious, whether it may be those employed at their desks, or "the pale artist plying his sickly trade," and enables such to return to their avocations, or their studies, with renovated energy, to labour for their own or for the public good. But as any thing, however good in itself, may be abused, therefore some regulations should be laid down as a guide to the fair angler in this his legitimate right, and some check imposed upon the poacher, who might be inclined to stop at nothing, however unfair. I think Waltonian societies would be all-sufficient to manage these matters, if composed of men of good character and good sense. There ought to be one of these societies established in the principal town in each district, and to have its honorary members branched out into the more distant parts. Perhaps a fine imposed, or even the frowns of the society, might be sufficient to deter poachers. The object ought to be, to regulate the times for angling, and to discountenance, or send to Coventry, such as spend almost the whole of their time in "beating the streams." They ought also to keep a watchful eye over such as care not how or in what manner they take fish, so as they may only get plenty of them. The "Honourable Society of Waltonians" ought to use every means in their power to protect the "glittering inhabitants of the waters" from being unfairly taken or destroyed. Pought nets ought to be prohibited, as well as all catching of the salmon fry in mill races, by putting thorn bushes into them, to stop their passing through, and then letting off the water. In this way, a cart load of these have often been known to be taken at once. Another method, still more destructive than this, is far too often put in practice; that is, what is called liming the burns. This ought to be utterly put a stop to by severe punishments. A clown, from ignorance,—but, perhaps, from something worse,—puts a few clots of unslaked, or quick, lime into a pool, or hole, in a burn, for the sake of killing a few trouts that he sees in it; and thus poisons the water running down to the rivulet, or the river, destroying every living creature to such a distance as may seem incredible. The attentive angler must sometimes have observed the almost invisible, incipient, living spawn in thousands, appearing only like floating mud, sunning themselves on a shallow sand-bank, which, as soon as the water thus poisoned reaches them, they drop down like mud indeed, and are no more seen.

How vividly do recollections of the enjoyment angling has afforded me return to the mind, now when those days have passed away, never more to return. Like the pleasing volume of the patriarch of anglers—Izaac Walton—volumes might yet be written to point out and to depicture the beautiful scenery of woods and water sides, in the midst of which the pleasures attendant upon this exhilarating and health-restoring, hungry, exercise is pursued. How many narratives of the exploits of the days thus spent might be raked up to dwell upon, when they are all over, like a pleasing dream!

Well do I remember mounting the stile which gave the first peep of the curling or rapid stream, over the intervening, dewy, daisy-covered holme—boundered by the early sloe, and the hawthorn-blossomed hedge—and hung in succession with festoons of the wild rose, the tangling woodbine, and the bramble, with their bewitching foliage—and the fairy ground—and the enchanting music of the lark, the blackbird, the throstle, and the blackcap, rendered soothing and plaintive by the cooings of the ringdove, which altogether charmed, but perhaps retarded, the march to the brink of the scene of action, with its willows, its alders, or its sallows—where early I commenced the days' patient campaign. The pleasing excitements of the angler still follow him, whether he is engaged in his pursuits amidst scenery such as I have attempted to describe, or on the heathery moor, or by burns guttered out by mountain torrents, and boundered by rocks or grey moss-covered stones, which form the rapids and the pools in which is concealed his beautiful yellow and spotted prey. Here, when tired and alone, I used to open my wallet and dine on cold meat and coarse rye bread, with an appetite that made me smile at the trouble people put themselves to in preparing the sumptuous feast; the only music in attendance was perhaps the murmuring burn, the whistling cry of the curlew, the solitary water ouzel, or the whirring wing of the moor game. I would, however, recommend to anglers not to go alone; a trio of them is better, and mutual assistance is often necessary.

It is foreign to my purpose to give any history, in this place, of the various kinds of fishes which anglers pursue; of this there is no need, for, I think, more treatises on this subject than on any other have been printed, to direct the angler to perfection in his art. But I cannot help noticing, as matter of regret, that more pains have not been taken to multiply fish, and to increase the breed of eels, as every permanent pool might so easily be fully stocked with them; and the latter are, when properly cooked, the most delicious of all fish kind. Walton has been particular in describing his mode of cooking them; but, unless he killed them beforehand, his method is a very cruel one.

In thus dwelling on subjects which stimulate man eagerly to pursue the work of destruction, and to extend his power over those animals of which he considers himself as the lord and master, and that they are destined to contribute to his pleasures or to his support, yet he ought not totally to forget that what is sport to him is death to them, and that the less of cruelty the better.

I think, had I not begun so early to be an angler, and before feelings of tenderness had entered the mind, my eagerness for angling might have been, on this score, somewhat abated; but I argued myself into a belief that fish had little sense, and scarcely any feeling, and they certainly have very much less of either than any of the land animals; but we see through all nature that one kind of animal seems destined to prey upon another, and fishes are the most voracious of all.

CHAPTER XXI.

NOT having seen Edinburgh since August, 1776, I longed to see it again, and set out on this journey on the 11th August, 1823, and went through by coach on that day. I always thought highly of Edinburgh and its bold and commanding situation; but the new town, or city of palaces, as it is sometimes called, had been added to it since I had seen it. But all these splendid buildings are of trivial import compared with the mass of intellect and science which had taken root and had been nurtered and grown up to such a height as to rival, and perhaps to outstrip, every other city in the world. My stay was only a fortnight; and this was a busy time, both as to its being taken up with the kindness and hospitality met with everywhere as well as in visiting its various scientific and other establishments. It being at a vacation season, when most of the learned professors were out of town, I saw only Professors Jameson and Wallace, and was often at the table of the former, which was surrounded by men of learning and science who visited him from all parts of the world. The attentions of Professor Wallace were most friendly. He shewed me the use of the Eidograph, an instrument which he had invented for the purpose of either reducing or enlarging a drawing or design most accurately to any size that might be required. I visited Patrick Neil, Esq., and was much pleased with seeing the tamed birds and other curiosities which embellished his little paradise. His uncommon kindness will ever remain impressed upon my memory. I also often called upon my friend, Mr. Archibald Constable, accounted the first bookseller in Scotland; and, although he was unwell at the time, I partook of his kind attentions. I visited the splendid exhibition of paintings of the late Sir Henry Raeburn, Bart., the rooms of Mr. William Allan, historical painter, Mr. Stewart, engraver, and those of several others who were absent. With other artists, who were known to me, I spent some time in several calls. These calls were upon my old friend, Mr. Nasmyth, landscape painter; my townsman, Mr. Wm. Nicholson; Mr. James Kirkwood, now up in years, but who had in his prime led the way to excellence in engraving. I also paid my respects to the son and successor of my kind friend of former days, the late Mr. Hector Gavin; and the same to the sons and successors of the late Mr. D. Lizars. All these had attained to that degree of excellence which did honour to Edinburgh, now the seat of learning, and rendered brilliant by the gems of art, and by the science with which it is adorned. I have almost forgotten to name my being introduced to Messrs. Ballantyne and Robertson, lithographic printers. Whilst I was in their office, the latter pressed me to make a sketch on the stone for him. I was then preparing to leave Edinburgh, and the only time left me was so short that I was obliged to draw this sketch before breakfast the next morning, and the proofs were taken from it on the same day. In doing this, though very slight, I could see what that manner of making prints was capable of. I left Edinburgh on the 23rd August, 1823, and I think I shall see Scotland no more.

After my journeys (long ago) to Cherryburn were ended, I used, as formerly, seldom to miss going in the mornings to Elswick Lane, to drink whey, or buttermilk, and commonly fell in with a party who went there for the same purpose; and this kind of social intercourse continued for many years. I also, at that time, on the Sunday afternoons, went to visit and contemplate in the church-yards, and there give vent to my mind, in feelings of regret, and in repeating a kind of soliloquy over the graves of those with whom I had been intimate.

> "And then I lov'd to haunt lone burial places,
> Pacing the church-yard path with noiseless tread,
> To pore on new-made graves for ghastly traces,—
> Brown crumbling bones of the forgotten dead."

I recounted in my memory the numbers of my friends thus put by to be forgotten, amongst the millions of others who had been for longer or shorter periods also in this world, and who have passed away into Eternity. Even the "frail memorial"—erected to "*perpetuate* the *memory*" of those who had been esteemed—seemed to be of little avail, and their mementos, as well as those decked out with ornamented flatteries, would, in time, all go to decay, and be no longer remembered than until all who once knew them were also dead; and the numbers of both the one and the other appeared to me to be so immense that to estimate them seemed impossible, and like attempting to count the grains of sand on the sea beach. It is thus that the grave swallows all up without distinction. The true estimate of their various merits can only be known to the Creator of all. It appears clear to those whose souls habitually adore and commune with Him, while they remain in this state of probation, that He will, in His infinite goodness, wisdom, truth, justice, and mercy—place everyone, on quitting this mortal abode, in the unknowable worlds befitting their reception.

Besides the temporary mementos dedicated to private worth, others of a different character may have their use. Monuments might therefore be erected to those who have, by their virtues and patriotism, promoted the happiness of mankind. It is a debt of gratitude due to the Author of our being for the loan of departed worth, and may stimulate others "to do so likewise." The posthumous praise or blame of the world is to them of no avail; they are done with all things on this side of Time, and are out of the reach of both the one and the other.

While I was pursuing my ramblings in the Highlands, and beheld with admiration the great projecting rocks so often to be seen holding up their bare heads to the winds, it struck me that it was a great pity they could not be converted to some use: and the best I could think of was, that the illustrious names of Wallace and Bruce—as well as those of their other worthies—should be inscribed upon them, to hold up their heads with these names to the sun for ever. I have often thought since, that the bare rocks in other parts of our islands might with good effect be filled up in the same way. The first name to be fixed upon ought to be that of Alfred the Great, followed by many others—statesmen, patriots, philosophers, poets, &c.—who have shone out like polished diamonds, and who have embellished and illumined this country, and civilized the world. Their venerated names, with their maxims, or quotations from their works, would fill up many of these rocks, which are waiting for them, and might make all who beheld them inclined to profit by, or to imitate, their virtues. How many incomparably good, wise, and beautiful texts from the Bible might also with great propriety be added to fill up every vacant spot. I often lamented that I had not the means to enable me to be at the expense of getting such quotations inscribed in this way. Often, while angling on a hot, sunny day, which slackened my sport, I have sat down by the water side, and thought over some of the beautiful lines of our poets, fit to be applied in this way; and remember my having thought of those lines of Cunningham, which I would, if I could have afforded it, have committed to the care of a rock. He says:—

> " How smooth that rapid river glides
>   Progressive to the deep !
> The poppies pendent o'er its sides
>   Have lull'd the waves to sleep.

"Pleasure's intoxicated sons!
Ye indolent! ye gay!
Reflect,—for as the river runs
Time wings his trackless way."

How easy would it be for gentlemen to get the names of the illustrious dead thus inscribed upon rocks; or, where that could not be done, to erect pillars, or small obelisks, over copious springs (like the holy wells of old), to contain such inscriptions as those I have hinted at, and thus leave these their marks behind them; and which would long continue to put the passing stranger in mind of some religious, moral, or patriotic sentiment; and, while he was refreshing himself by quenching his thirst, he might be put in mind that—

"Man wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little long."

CHAPTER XXII.

Having already noticed my beginnings, or first efforts, in engraving on wood; and as at that time this department of the arts was at the very lowest ebb in this country, and, I believe, also in every other country in Europe, it may perhaps be of some use, or at least may excite some curiosity, to know the part I took in renewing, or bringing into use, this to me new art, as far as I was able, with the slender means in my hands, and the many difficulties I had to contend with and surmount, before anything like an approach towards perfection could be arrived at. I ought first distinctly to state that, at that time, it never entered into my head that it was a branch of art that would stand pre-eminent for utility, or that it could ever in the least compete with engraving on copper. I ought also to observe that no vain notions of my arriving at any eminence ever passed through my mind, and that the sole stimulant with me was the pleasure I derived from imitating natural objects (and I had no other patterns to go by), and the opportunity it afforded me of making and drawing my designs on the wood, as the only way I had in my power of giving vent to a strong propensity to gratify my feelings in this way. In process of time, however, as I began to improve, and seeing the practical use printers were making of wood cuts, the utility and importance of them began to be unfolded to my view; and the more I have since thought upon the subject, the more I am confirmed in the opinions I have entertained, that the use of wood cuts will know no end, or, so long as the importance of printing is duly appreciated and the liberty of the press held sacred.

The first difficulty I felt, as I proceeded, was in getting the cuts I had executed printed so as to look anything like my drawings on the blocks of wood, nor corresponding to the labour I had bestowed upon the cutting of the designs. At that time pressmen were utterly ignorant as to any proper effect that was to be produced; or even, if one of them possessed any notions of excellence beyond the common run of workmen, his materials for working were so defective that he could not execute even what he himself wished to accomplish. The common pelt balls then in use, so daubed the cut, and blurred and overlapped its edges, that the impression looked disgusting. To remedy this defect, I was obliged carefully to shave down the edges round about; and this answered the end I had in view. The next difficulty was worse to surmount, and required a long time to get over it; and that was, to lower down the surface on all the parts I wished to appear pale, so as to give the appearance of the required distance; and this process will always continue to call forth and to exercise the judgment of every wood engraver, even after he knows what effect his *careful pressman* may be enabled to produce, from this his manner of cutting. On this all artists must form their own ideas. I think no exact description can be laid down as a rule for others to go by: they will by practice have to find out this themselves. While I was patiently labouring and contending with difficulties which I could not overcome, I was shown some impressions from wood cuts done long ago, with cross-hatching, such as I thought I should never be able to execute. These were from wood cuts by Albert Durer, and perhaps some others of his day, in the collection of the Rev. John Brand, the Newcastle Historian; and from these I concluded that Albert Durer must have had some very easy way of loading his blocks with such an useless profusion of cross-hatching, or he would not have done them so, unless, indeed, he had found out some easy means of etching the wood (or perhaps metal plates), quite unknown to me; but, if otherwise, I then, in changing my opinion, could think of no other way than that he must have cut his blocks on the plank or side way of the wood, on which it would be more easy to pick out the interstices between the squares, or the lozenge-shaped lines, than as I (at that time) thought it possible to do on the end way of the wood. One of these plank blocks, said to have been drawn by Albert Durer, was shown to me by my kind friend George Allan, Esq., of the Grange, Darlington. The drawing, which was done with great accuracy, seemed to me to have been done by a crow-quill, with a kind of varnish ink, the strokes of which, from their regularity, looked as if they had been printed from a well-executed copper plate, and transferred to the block. After labouring for some time, endeavouring to produce the like effect on my blocks, on the end way of the wood, not indeed to my satisfaction, I felt mortified in not succeeding to my wish; and I then began to think the impressions must have been printed from two blocks. This, indeed, I soon found to be quite easy to do, as well as being beautifully correct; and any artist may see this in a few minutes, by cutting parallel lines on a piece of wood, and from it taking, by his hand, an impression on a piece of paper, and then again inking the same cut, and printing it in the same way, either directly in a cross or in an oblique direction, upon the first impression. This can also easily be done, from two cuts, at a printing press, and is much easier to do, and better than the labour necessarily bestowed upon one cross-hatched block. When I had accomplished this, and satisfied myself that the process was both simple and perfect, as to obtaining the object I so much wanted, my curiosity on this score ceased, and I then concluded that in this way the cross-hatching might be set aside as a thing of no use at all. The artists indeed of the present day have brought it to such a pitch of perfection that I do not know that it can be carried any further; and in this they have also been so marvellously aided by the improved methods now used in printing their cuts, that one would be led to conclude that this department has also attained to perfection; and, had this not been the case, the masterly execution of wood cuts, either by crossed lines, or otherwise, would have continued to be beheld with disgust or contempt. I have long been of opinion that the cross-hatching of wood cuts, for book work, is a waste of time; as every desired effect can be much easier obtained by plain parallel lines. The other way is not the legitimate object of wood engraving. Instead of imitating the manner of copper etchings, at a great cost of labour and time, on the wood, such drawings might have been as soon etched on the copper at once; and, where a large impression of any publication was not required, the copper plate would have cost less, and lasted long enough for the purpose intended. I never could discover any additional beauty or colour that the crossed strokes gave to the impression, beyond the effect produced by plain parallel lines. This is very apparent when to a certainty the plain surface of the wood will print as black as ink and balls can make it, without any further labour at all; and it may easily be seen that the thinnest strokes cut upon the plain surface will throw *some light* on the subject or design: and, if these strokes are made wider and deeper, it will receive more light; and if these strokes, again, are made still wider, or of equal thickness to the black lines, the colour these produce will be a grey; and the more the white strokes are thickened, the nearer will they, in their varied shadings, approach to white, and, if quite taken away, then a perfect white is obtained. The methods I have pursued appear to me to be the simple and easy perfection of wood engraving for book printing, and, no doubt, will appear better or worse according to the ability of the artist who executes them. The first time I ever heard anything about colour being produced by plain engraving was in the compliments paid me by Dr. Thos. Stout, for my engraving on his large silver box. The device, or design, I have now forgotten, but never what he said on the occasion; and from that time I attempted *colour* upon the wood; and, though I felt much difficulty in my attempts at producing it, yet the principle is there, and will shine out under the skill and management of any eminent engraver on wood who is gifted with a painter's eye; and his work will be complete if seconded by a pressman of ability, who may happen to have a talent and fellow-feeling for the art.

I have before noticed my lowering down the surface of the wood, in order to produce the effect of distance, and the same thing holds good with every figure where different shades of colour is desired. Leaving the surface of the block without being pared down at all, and relying only on the lines being left thicker or smaller for producing the requisite depth of shade, this surface thus left acts as a support to the more delicate lines, which have been engraved on the lowered part of the cut. After all the parts are thus lowered, a further paring down of the edges of the various figures which the cut contains may be necessary to prevent their appearing as if surrounded by a white line. The delicate lines thus lowered, so as to print pale or distant parts, and thus protected by the stronger lines left on the surface—a wood cut, with care, will print an incredible number: how many it may be difficult exactly to say; but it once happened that I had the opportunity given me of guessing pretty nearly at this, from the calculation of the late Mr. S. Hodgson, when he called upon me with a gentleman (a stranger to me) who seemed extremely curious to know everything respecting engraving on wood. One of his queries was made with a view of ascertaining how many impressions a wood cut would print. Not having anything in mind at the moment, to enable me to satisfy him, I began to consider, and it then struck me that a little delicate cut—a view of Newcastle—was done for Mr. H. many years before, as a *fac* for his newspaper. I then turned to the date in my ledger, when he calculated exactly, and found it had printed above 900,000. This cut was continued in the newspaper several years afterwards. It was protected in the manner before noticed by a strong black line, or border, surrounding it, within which the surface was lowered previous to cutting the view. This cut is still kept; and, except being somewhat damaged by being tossed about amongst other castaway cuts, might, by being a little repaired, yet print many thousands. This is mentioned with a view to show the great length of time that cuts done in this way will last, if they are carefully adjusted to the height of the type, and kept out of the hands of ignorant, rude pressmen.

I am of opinion that cuts done in the manner called surface-cutting cannot stand anything like so large an impression as when they are lowered thus ; for the delicate lines, when left on the surface, must soon break down from the heavy pressure to which they are exposed.

CHAPTER XXIII.

It is foreign to my purpose to criticize the works of brother artists of the present day. I behold their excellent productions with pleasure; in them there is no falling off: they surpass those of the artists of the olden times. I cannot, however, help lamenting that, in all the vicissitudes which the art of wood engraving has undergone, some species of it is lost and done away: I mean the large blocks with the prints from them, so common to be seen when I was a boy in every cottage and farm house throughout the country. These blocks, I suppose, from their size, must have been cut on the plank way on beach, or some other kind of close-grained wood; and from the immense number of impressions from them, so cheaply and extensively spread over the whole country, must have given employment to a great number of artists, in this inferior department of wood cutting; and must also have formed to them an important article of traffic. These prints, which were sold at a very low price, were commonly illustrative of some memorable exploits, or were, perhaps, the portraits of eminent men, who had distinguished themselves in the service of their country, or in their patriotic exertions to serve mankind. Besides these, there were a great variety of other designs, often with songs added to them of a moral, a patriotic, or a rural tendency, which served to enliven the circle in which they were admired. To enumerate the great variety of these *pictures* would be a task. A constant one in every house, was "King Charles' Twelve Good Rules." Amongst others were representations of remarkable victories at sea, and battles on land, often accompanied with portraits of those who commanded, and others who had borne a conspicuous part in these contests with the enemy. The house at Ovingham, where our dinner poke was taken care of when at school, was hung round with views or representations of the battles of Zondorf, and several others; also the portraits of Tom Brown, the valiant grenadier, of Admiral Haddock, Admiral Benbow, and other portraits of admirals. There was also a representation of the "Victory" man-of-war, of 100 guns, commanded by Admiral Sir John Balchen, and fully manned with 1,100 picked seamen and volunteers, all of whom, with this uncommonly fine ship, were lost —*sunk to the bottom of the sea.* This was accompanied by a poetical lament of the catastrophe, part of which was—

"Ah! hapless Victory, what avails
Thy towering masts, thy spreading sails."

Some of the portraits, I recollect, now and then to be met with, were very well done in this way, on wood. In Mr. Gregson's kitchen, one of this character hung against the wall many years. It was a remarkably good likeness of Captain Coram. In cottages everywhere were to be seen the "Sailor's Farewell" and his "Happy Return," "Youthful Sports," and the "Feats of Manhood," "The Bold Archers Shooting at a Mark," "The Four Seasons," &c. Some subjects were of a funny—others of a grave character. I think the last portraits I remember were of some of the rebel lords and "Duke Willy." These kind of wood cut pictures are long since quite gone out of fashion, which I feel very sorry for, and most heartily wish they could be revived. It is desirable, indeed, that the subjects should be well chosen; for it must be of great importance that such should be the case; as, whatever can serve to instil morality and patriotism into the minds of the whole people must tend greatly to promote their own happiness and the good of the community. All men, however poor they may be, ought to feel that this is their country, as well as it is that of the first nobleman of the land; and, if so, they will be equally as interested in its happiness and prosperity.

There is another way, not yet indeed entered upon, of similar import to the foregoing, in which prints might with good effect be made of subjects fit to embellish almost every house throughout our country: and that is from wood blocks printed in colours, like paper-hangings. Having seen some such done by paper-stainers, so as almost to equal good paintings, leads me to wish that this method could be pursued—for the same ends as those already noticed. The most remarkable productions of art of this kind from blocks done to print in colours, like beautiful little paintings, were sent to me by Gubitz, of Berlin; they might indeed be said to be perfection. Several impressions from duplicate or triplicate blocks, printed in this way, of a very large size, were also given to me, as well as a drawing of the press from which they were printed, many years ago, by Jean Baptiste Jackson, who had been patronized by the king of France; but, whether these prints had been done with the design of embellishing the walls of houses in that country, I know not. They had been taken from paintings of eminent old masters, and were mostly Scripture pieces. They were well drawn, and perhaps correctly copied from the originals, yet in my opinion none of them looked well. Jackson left Newcastle quite enfeebled with age, and, it was said, ended his days in an asylum, under the protecting care of Sir Gilbert Elliot, bart., at some place on the border near the Teviot, or on Tweedside.

Whether the speculations here noticed may be thought worthy of being acted upon, I know not, but it is not to any of the above noticed ways of wood cutting that my attention is directed: it is, in my ardent desire to see the *stroke* engraving on wood carried to the utmost perfection, that I hope the world will be gratified; and I trust the time is not distant when its superior excellence will be seen, particularly in landscape scenery, so as to surpass copper-plate engravings. The effect to be produced by wood engraving has not, in that way, yet been tried, nor its powers made apparent. This is, I think, to be attained by two, or even more, blocks being employed, on one print, so that a greater and more natural effect—as to colour and softness—may be produced. I am well aware that some difficulty may arise, as to bringing off a clear impression of fine strokes from so large a surface, but in this age of mechanical improvement and invention, I think this apparent difficulty will readily be got over. Perhaps printing from a roller, instead of an even down pull, may easily accomplish this business. I have often thought, had William Woollett been a wood engraver, he would have shown its exellence long ago: his prints from copper have not been equalled; but, from the nature of the wood, and the effect it produces, he would have advanced a step further, and on it have outdone his excellence on copper. If I live, health and sight continued, I will make the attempt to show that all this is not a visionary theory. Should I not live to get this Memoir printed under my own inspection,—or whether it will ever be printed at all, I know not,—but at any rate the manuscript itself will show, were that necessary, how ardently I have ever wished well to arts and artists; and though, in my endeavours to show this, I have often been thwarted and disappointed, yet I never lost sight of my object, nor became disheartened in my struggles to fight through, and surmount numberless difficulties and bars thrown in my way.

I have already noticed my brother John, as my first pupil, and therefore have little further to say respecting him, only, that Nature seemed to have befitted him for becoming a first-rate artist; but, at the time he was with me, the thoughts of arriving at excellence did not enter into our heads, and he left the world at the time when wood engraving was only beginning to be looked upon as a matter of any interest. And, now when the time is fast approaching for my winding up all my labours, I may be allowed to name my own son and partner, whose time has been taken up with attending to all the branches of our business: and who, I trust, will not let wood engraving go down; and, though he has not shown any partiality towards it, yet the talent is there, and I hope he will call it forth.

CHAPTER XXIV.

How far I may venture further to obtrude my opinions, or advice, on the notice of artists, particularly engravers on wood, I know not, but they may readily imagine that I cannot help feeling a deep interest, and an ardent desire, that the art may long flourish, and that those who follow it may feel happy in the pursuit. Perhaps what I have already said may not be uninteresting to some of them, and, if I knew how I could go further, in any way that might urge or stimulate them to feel enthusiasm for this art, it should not be wanting; for the wish, though tottering on the down-hill of life, is extended beyond the grave.

The sedentary artist ought, if possible, to have his dwelling in the country, where he can follow his business undisturbed, surrounded by pleasing rural scenery, and the fresh air. He ought not to sit at work too long at a time, but to unbend his mind with some variety of employment; for which purpose it is desirable that artists, with their *little cots*, shall also have each a garden attached, in which they may find both exercise and amusement, and only occasionally visit the city or the smoky town;

and that chiefly for the purpose of meetings with their brother artists, in which they may make an interchange of their sentiments, and commune with each other as to whatever regards the arts. Were I allowed to become their M.D., my prescription should cost them nothing, and be easily taken—it being only attentively to observe two or three rules, the first of which is, that they will contrive to be very hungry once a day, never to overload the stomach, nor indulge to satiety in eating anything. By persisting in this, they will find their reward in great good health, and a vigorous, unclouded mind: by a little observation they may clearly see that a great portion of mankind "live to eat"—not eat to live.* To say more to men of sense and artists,—which a desire to contribute everything in my power towards their peace of mind and happiness prompts me to do,—I may be allowed to add, that those of them who have attained to eminence will find themselves pursued by envy; for "There is no species of hatred greater than that which a man of mediocrity bears to a man of genius; his reach of thought, his successful combinations, and his sudden felicities are never forgiven by those whom nature has fashioned in a less perfect mould."

It is the duty of parents and guardians to endeavour, with the utmost care, to discover the capacities and fitness of youth for any business before they engage in it; for, without they are innately gifted with the power of becoming artists, the want of that power will cause the pursuit to be felt by them as up-hill work, and be productive of unhappiness to them through life. But the fondness of parents for their offspring is mostly such as to blind them in forming a judgment, and disappointment is sure to follow. It would be well for such parents to read Gay's fable of "The Owl, the Swan, the Cock, the Spider, the Ass, and the Farmer." It may indeed be conceded that there are some rare exceptions to this general rule; for a man may be so formed in body and mind —with such symmetry and health in the one, and such energy in the other—that he may advance a great way towards perfection in anything he ardently pursues. But an "Admirable Chrichton," or a Sir Joshua Reynolds, does not often appear. Men so gifted by nature, whether as artists, or in any other way where intellectual powers are to be drawn forth, ought never to despair of rising to eminence, or to imagine that they can never equal such men as have excelled all others in their day. It ought to be kept in mind that the same superintending Providence which gifted those men with talents to excite wonder and to improve society from time to time, in all ages, still rules the world and the affairs of mankind, and will continue to do so for ever, as often as the services of such men are wanted; and this consideration ought to act as a stimulant to their successors, to endeavour to surpass in excellence the brilliant luminaries who have only gone before them to pave the way and to enlighten their paths. All artists—and indeed all men—ought to divide their time by regularly appropriating one portion of it to one purpose, and another part of it to the varied business that may be set apart for another. In this way a deal of work may be got through; and the artist, after leaving off his too intense application, would see, as it were, what he had been doing with *new eyes*, and would thus be enabled to criticize the almost endless variety of lights, shades, and effects, which await his pencil to produce.

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* All youths, but especially those who follow sedentary employments, ought to exercise with dumb-bells half-an-hour or so before going to bed, and at other times when convenient. Were this more practised, we should hear of few dying of consumption.

Had I been a painter, I never would have copied the works of "old masters," or others, however highly they might be esteemed. I would have gone to nature for all my patterns; for she exhibits an endless variety not possible to be surpassed, and scarcely ever to be truly imitated. I would, indeed, have endeavoured to discover how those artists of old made or compounded their excellent colours, as well as the disposition of their lights and shades, by which they were enabled to accomplish so much and so well.

The work of the painter may be said to be as endless as the objects which nature continually presents to his view; and it is his judgment that must direct him in the choice of such as may be interesting. In this he will see what others have done before him, and the shoals and quicksands that have retarded their progress, as well as the rocks they have at last entirely split upon. On his taking a proper survey of all this, he will see the "labour in vain" that has been bestowed upon useless designs, which have found, and will continue to find, their way to a garret, while those of an opposite character will, from their excellence, be preserved with perhaps increasing value for ages to come. In performing all this, great industry will be required, and it ought ever to be kept in mind, that, as in morals, nothing is worth listening to but truth, so in arts nothing is worth looking at but such productions as have been faithfully copied from nature. Poetry, indeed, may launch out or take further liberties to charm the intellect of its votaries. It is only such youths as Providence has gifted with strong intellectual, innate powers that are perfectly fit to embark in the fine arts, and the power and propensity is often found early to bud out and show itself. This is seen in the young musician, who, without having even learned his A B C's, breaks out, with a random kind of unrestrained freedom, to whistle and sing. How often have I been amused at the first essays of the ploughboy, and how charmed to find him so soon attempt to equal his whistling and singing master, at the plough stilts, and who, with avidity unceasing, never stopped till he thought he excelled him. The future painter is shown by his strong propensity to sketch whatever objects in nature attract his attention, and excite him to imitate them. The poet, indeed, has more difficulties to contend with at first than the others, because he must know language, or be furnished with words wherewith to enable him to express himself even in his first essays in doggrel metre and sing-song rhymes. In all the varied ways by which men of talent are befitted to enlighten, to charm, and to embellish society, as they advance through life,—if they entertain the true feeling that every production they behold is created, not by chance, but by design,—they will find an increasing and endless pleasure in the exhaustless stores which nature has provided to attract the attention and promote the happiness of her votaries during the time of their sojourning here.

The painter need not roam very far from his home, in any part of our beautiful isles, to meet with plenty of charming scenes from which to copy nature—either on an extended or a limited scale—and in which he may give full scope to his genius and to his pencil, either in animate or inanimate subjects. His search will be crowned with success in the romantic ravine—the placid holme—the hollow dell—or amongst the pendant foliage of the richly ornamented dean; or by the sides of burns which roar or dash along, or run murmuring from pool to pool through their pebbly beds: all this bordered perhaps by a back-ground of ivy-covered, hollow oaks (thus clothed as if to hide their age),—of elms, willows, and birch, which seem kindly to offer shelter to an under-growth of hazel, whins, broom, juniper, and heather, with the wild rose, the woodbine, and the bramble, and beset with clumps of fern and foxglove; while the edges of the mossy braes are covered with a profusion of wild flowers, "born to blush unseen," which peep out amongst the creeping groundlings—the bleaberry, the wild strawberry, the harebell, and the violet; but I feel a want of words to enable the pen to give an adequate description of the beauty and simplicity of these neglected spots, which nature has planted as if to invite the admiration of such as have hearts and eyes to appreciate and enjoy these her exquisite treats, while she may perhaps smile at the formal, pruning efforts of the gardener, as well as doubt whether the pencil of the artist will ever accomplish a correct imitation. But, be all this as it may, she has spread out her beauties to feast the eyes, and to invite the admiration of all mankind, and to whet them up to an ardent love of all her works. How often have I, in my angling excursions, loitered upon such sunny braes, lost in extacy, and wishing I could impart to others the pleasures I felt on such occasions: but they must see with their own eyes to feel as I felt, and to form an opinion how far the scenes depictured by poets fall short of the reality. The naturalist's poet—Thompson—has done much: so have others. Allan Ramsay's

> "Habbies Howe,
> Where a' the sweets of spring and summer grow,"

may have exhibited such as I have noticed, but the man endued with a fit turn of mind, and inclined to search out such "beauty-spots," will not need the aid of poets to help him on in his enthusiastic ardour.

CHAPTER XXV.

When very young I read the Bible through and through, but I, at that time, minded it no more than other histories with which my scanty library was furnished. I could not then judge of it, nor properly estimate the sublime precepts it contains. I felt, indeed, much pleased and excited by the numerous battles therein described. Sober reflection, however, respecting them quite altered the bent of my inclination that way, and I began and continued to consider the political history of the Israelites as very wicked; for they are so described as under the direction of Moses, who, it is said, always obtained the command or sanction of the Lord to set the people at work in the business of war, at which they appear to have been very ready and very expert. It is, however, evident that in the nation of the Israelites there were men of great intellectual powers, and inspired with an ardent desire to trace the Author of Nature through His works, as well as having a foresight of their future destiny. It being clear to them that it was the intention of Omnipotence that men should live in a state of civilized society, under this impression they set to work, as well as they could with an uncivilized people, to bring about such a desirable order of things, but in which they must have felt great difficulties ; the first of which was to abolish Paganism, and to establish the pure religion of worshipping one God only ; thus, "Thou shalt have none other gods but me," was the first commandment, and which was most strenuously urged upon the Israelites in every way, and in every transaction of their lives, while they were kept together as a nation. Science, and a knowledge of nature, on which science is founded, could not in those early times be expected to be known, either by Moses or their other governers and teachers, who could not explain such important matters to the people otherwise than they did. The wonders of this world and the magnitude of the universe were not then contemplated upon ; neither was it perhaps necessary to attempt any explanation of them in those dark ages : and, besides, it appears it was not a leading object : civilization seems to have been the first and perhaps the only important business they had at that time in view. They therefore, in their endeavours to accomplish this, and to govern and keep the people in awe, attempted to personify the Deity, and to prescribe the boundary of time and space, as the theatre on which He acted, that they, the people, might thus understand something of the meaning of the commands so strenuously laid upon them ; not a little of which was delivered to them in allegory and fable. Moses began by telling them of the beginning of the world, and the length of time it took to make it, and the manner in which God created Adam and Eve as the parents of the whole human race; of Paradise, or the Garden of Eden; of the disobedience of our first parents in eating forbidden fruit, and that this transgression entailed misery, sin, and death upon the whole human race. This "Original Sin," however strange it may appear to thinking men, has been kept up *in terrorem*, with uncommon pains, for hundreds of years past, and is continued with unabating fervency to the present time. That mankind should suffer under this condemnation, for the fault of these our first parents, seems impiously to set aside the justice of an All-wise and Benevolent God.

As to the time it took to create this world, and the whirling, floating, universe of which it is comparatively a speck or mote—that is beyond human comprehension; and Time, Eternity—a Beginning and an End—are still much more beyond the reach of thought; for the powers of the mind would soon become bewildered and lost in attempting to form any conception, by figures, of what is meant by innumerable millions of centuries: and here on this subject we must rest! This sublime—this amazing —this mighty work of suns and worlds innumerable is too much for the vision of a finite, purblind, proud, little atom of the Creation, strutting or crawling about in the shape of man. It is sufficient for the soul of man in this life to reverence and adore the Omnipresent, and, except through his works, the unknowable God, whose wisdom, and power, and goodness, has no bounds, and who has been pleased to enable his reasoning creatures so far to see that everything is made by design, and nothing by chance; and, from the display of His infinite power, that everything in the universe is systematic; all is connection, adhesion, affinity: hence we may infer some principle of order, some moving power, some mighty agent—but all this still ends in the name of Deity, and dwells awfully retired beyond the reach of mortal eye.

What Moses has said about the deluge, and the destruction it occasioned to every living creature, we are led to conclude must have been handed down to him in ancient Eastern traditions, and it requires no over-stretched credulity to believe that a deluge happened which destroyed every living creature on that part of the earth over which its devastations were spread; for it cannot be doubted that this globe has undergone many such deluges, convulsions, and changes, equally difficult to account for; and geologists at this day feel convinced of this, from the changes which they see matter has undergone, but of which they are still left greatly to conjecture as to the cause. They cannot, however, doubt the power of a comet (if it be the will of the Mighty Director) to melt the ices from the poles, and to throw the sea out of its place, or to reduce this globe instantly to a cinder—a vitrifaction—to ashes, or to dust; and that, in its near approach to this our world, it may have occasioned the various changes and phenomena which have happened, and may happen again. The marine productions found imbedded in the earth so many fathoms below its surface, supplies another source of wonder, and seems either to confirm the foregoing hypothesis, or to lead men to conclude that a great portion of the earth has once been covered by the sea; and it may, perhaps, not be carrying conjecture too far to suppose that nations have been overflowed and sunk to its bottom, while others have arisen out of it; and that, in the apparently slow changes which are continually operating upon all matter, new nations may yet arise, and be now in progress to take their turn on this globe.* Every mountain and hill is becoming less and less, and is by little and little apparently slowly sliding away into the ocean; and the same waste may be seen in the many tons of earthy mud which every flooded river carries off, and deposits in the sea. The lakes are also continually operated upon, by the wasting or wearing away of the outlets that form the barriers by which their waters were and are at present stayed, and it is not unlikely that every valley was once a lake, till they were operated upon like those still left, preparatory to their change to dry land.

But the early history of mankind, nor the changes, the wonders, nor the mighty events which have happened to this globe, cannot be known; and we may reasonably suppose men must have long remained in darkness and ignorance till rescued from such a state first by hieroglyphics and then by letters. What they were before these enabled them to interchange their thoughts, preparatory to a social intercourse, is involved in darkness, on which conjecture may invent and exhaust itself in vain. Nation after nation, in unknown ages past, may have glided away, or have been by the accumulation of their own wickedness, more suddenly hurled into oblivion, before the reasoning powers were drawn forth or men bestowed the least thought upon the duties they had to perform, or the business they had to fulfil, as the will of the Creator while they sojourned here. But the providence of God is over all His creatures, and it pleased Him that the reasoning powers should not remain longer dormant, and the provision made for the change, in the natural order of things, was placed in the latent intellectual powers gifted to man, and drawn forth from his inspired mind, which thus put in action, as it may be presumed, was the first effort of cause and effect that produced the Bible, which, as far as we know, seems to have been the first instrument of knowledge that shed its rays over and revealed to mankind the accountable station they were destined to hold on this globe. Before the religious and moral precepts of the venerable old Book made their way over a more civilized world, and taught rational beings to worship one God, the Father of All, and to consider each other as brethren, it does not appear that the great mass of mankind had bestowed a thought upon the astonishing miracles of creation by which they were surrounded, and which were presented to their understanding and sight in so visible and tangible a shape that it required no faith to believe in them, nor any thing to raise doubts in their minds as to their reality.

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* In my brother's colliery at Mickley Bank, about 30 fathoms below the surface, perfect muscles have been found imbedded in ironstone. In appearance they differed not from those newly taken from the muscle scarp. The shells effervesced with acid, but the insides were ironstone, the same as that with which they were surrounded.

The brilliantly studded canopy of suns and worlds above their heads, and, as a part of these, the equally wonderful globe of this earth and sea, which is allotted to them, they could not, with their clouded intellects and want of science see nor appreciate, till the mind by research became illumined by degrees, in the varied blaze of light spread abroad—which will in some degree enable men to see the perfection of the Omnipotent Author of the whole. Viewing the Bible as to it moral and religious contents, in this way, the good old Book ought to be held in veneration and esteem, as containing the most unequivocal marks of the most exalted piety and the the purest benevolence. Give it therefore, my dear children, a place in your regards, to which it is entitled; and, amidst the necessary cares of life, never lose sight of your destination for another. An infinitely more important state awaits us beyond the grave. It may be presumed that this original and sacred document will continue to arrest the attention of reasoning beings as long as men continue to reason, and be an eternal stimulant—together with other stimulants so abundantly presented by the wonders of the universe—to lead the soul to rest its hopes on the source from whence it derived its existence.

CHAPTER XXVI.

I HAVE before ventured my opinion on the political history of the Israelites and their wars, and I wish I could not believe in them ; but I fear that portion of their history is too true. The example thus set has been followed since by other nations, to wage the horrid wars in which they have embarked on the most trivial pretences, whenever their rulers found it convenient to give vent to their bad passions, wantonly to engage in them. There are many other matters related in the Bible which operate as stumbling-blocks to those who otherwise revere it for the clear truths set forth in its texts. These consist in one part contradicting, or apparently contradicting, another part, and, in some cases, of making assertions which appear to be derogatory to the Majesty of Omnipotence. There may, indeed, be two causes assigned as reasons for these. The first is, in reading many portions of the Scriptures literally which must have been intended to be understood allegorically. It surely could never be meant to be literally understood that the sun and moon stood still by the command of Joshua, till he was "avenged of his enemies," and that the regular order of nature and the universe was set aside to please Joshua in his man-killing pursuits. That this was the way by which Omnipotence willed the destruction of whole nations of people, does not seem to accord with the reverence with which man ought to view his Maker, when, had it been His will that such nations should no longer inhabit the earth, the whole of such a people thus devoted might have been annihilated by a puff of pestilential wind, if Omnipotence had pleased to do so. Although it does not become us to scan what was, or what was not, His will, as we can only judge of all such matters according to our crude and weak conceptions.

The next cause for suspecting the accuracy of several parts of the Sacred Book arises from the supposition that these may not have been correctly translated.* All these seemingly contradictory passages, not being clearly understood, have been a most fertile source of employment for self-interested and bigoted men, who have attempted giving their explanations and contradictory comments and annotations upon them, and twisted them into meanings, often to bewilder the common-sense of mankind, to suit certain selfish purposes subservient to their own ends. It would, I think, have been much better to have left people to judge upon these texts as well as they could themselves, rather than trust to such explanations, or to pin their faith on the sleeve of such men. I fear they have done more harm than good.

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* The Rev. James Murray (before mentioned) showed me a chapter of the Book of Job which he had translated. It was in poetry as near the original as he was able to make it. The sense and meaning was clear and easily to be understood, but not so that of the chapter from which he took it.

But all these and such like doubts seem trivial and light in the balance when weighed against the solid, sublime truths and valuable instructions contained in the ancient, venerable book. The mind of man thus prepared by the sacred texts laid open to him by the Bible, as well as by the help of other systems of morality, which all lend their help to lead him in the paths of rectitude—in this state he sees himself surrounded by the wonders of creation, and furnished with passions given him for the wisest purposes, to spur him on to exertions without which the affairs of this beautiful world would soon be at a stand-still, and he would then soon revert to unintellectual apathy or savage barbarity, and would cease to adore God, and seek His providential care and protection. But, when the passions are not fully kept under by the reasoning guide, man feels himself to be a strange compound—a heterogeneous mixture of pure metal and base alloy, and placed in the infancy of an endless, and therefore an infinitely important and mysterious, but conscious existence. "Wonderfully and fearfully made," he views with amazement "this pleasing, anxious being"—this spirit confined in mortality with Heaven's own pilot placed within as its guide, and a soul, fed like the flame of a lamp, to enlighten his path to eternity. Thus prepared by the hand of Omnipotence, his reasoning powers commence their operations; his mind is then his kingdom, and his will his law as to his deeds in this life, but for which he must render an account before the justice of his Maker, in another state of existence—in another world; otherwise he has lived in vain in this. If he avails himself of the reasoning power,—the choicest gift of his Maker, and by which He has revealed himself to man,—then will he feel something of a foretaste of the future happiness he is preparing for himself in eternity. But if he will perversely cease to commune with his own soul, or reject its admonitions, and turn away from them, he thus puts himself under another guide, and must then become debased, degraded, and associated with sin; for he then suffers his bad passions and gross appetites to overpower his reason, and thus creates for himself an evil spirit, or a devil and a hell in his own breast, that consumes or annihilates his good spiritual guide, and disfigures the image of God within him, before it returns to whence it came. Thus to appear before his Maker must be a hell of itself of fearful import—not to be endured—and the greatest possible punishment the debased and polluted soul can undergo; and it may be well for us all to keep in remembrance that a year of pleasure can be outbalanced by a day of pain. To judge simply of all this, it may be concluded that those who, from pure motives, have shed abroad the greatest *quantum* of happiness to mankind, and to all God's creatures, while they sojourned here, will, according to our notions of justice (beside the pleasure derived from self-approbation in this life), be rewarded, and entitled to such-like but more exalted happiness to all eternity.

Whatever weight these opinions of mine may have upon others, I know not; they are given with the best intentions, and they concern all men. They are on a subject which, in its own nature, forms a more sublime and important object of enquiry than any to which our intellectual powers can be applied. It is on them that religion, the life of the soul, is built. Religion is both natural and necessary to man. Those who reject this primary sentiment of veneration for the Supreme Being, only show their inferiority to other men: like those born blind, they cannot perfectly understand the nature of vision, and thence conclude there is no such thing as light in existence.

Religion is of a pure and spotless nature; it is uniform, consistent, and of the same complexion and character in all nations. Languages and customs may greatly differ, but the language of the pure devotion of the heart to its Maker is the same over the face of the whole earth. Religion, therefore, demands our utmost reverence; and, as such, that which was taught by Jesus of Nazareth. I revere the sublime, and yet simple, plain doctrines and truly charitable principles which Christ laid down, and enforced by his own example. His life was a continued scene of active benevolence: no fatigue was too hard to be borne, no inconvenience too great to be submitted to, provided he could instruct the ignorant, reclaim the vicious, relieve the destitute, and comfort the mournful. Such was the religion of Jesus Christ, "who went about doing good!" He spoke only of one God, and of Him with the utmost reverence, as his Heavenly Father and the Father of all mankind. Christianity, in its purity, is the most liberal and best religion in the world. Its inspired Author preached up the cheerful doctrine of man's reviving again after death, and of the certainty of his afterwards living to eternity, and did his utmost to persuade all mankind to live godly lives, that their souls might thereby be prepared to return to God, the Author and the Giver of all Good, as unblemished as possible; and thus, so far as his influence reached, and his commands were acted upon, he may truly be said to be the Saviour of Mankind. But, there are questions connected with this subject which none but the Almighty God can solve. It was by the divine will, and by the providence of God, that he appeared on earth. Gifted with inspired powers, his immaculate mind thus made him the instrument befitting the mission he held, to teach mankind, then lost and grovelling in wickedness and corruption, the important lessons of religion and morality, and to reclaim such of the lost flock, high and low, as had grown up and established themselves in iniquity.

CHAPTER XXVII.

I NEVER read Hume on miracles; I did not need to do so; but I have always thought that the man must be very difficult to please who could not be thoroughly satisfied with the one—the unutterably great one—the miracle of the universe: made up, indeed, of millions of other miracles of its component parts, which will for ever excite the astonishment of reasoning creatures, and draw forth their adoration to the Great Author of the whole, as long as it shall please Him to gift them with the power to do so.

Those who think for themselves, and can believe in one God, and reverence, adore, and worship Him, must ever feel disgusted to dwell on the endless modes of faith with which mankind have been pestered and stultified for ages past, and also feel grieved to think upon the evils—the persecutions—the wars—and the miseries, these have from time to time inflicted upon the half-civilized world. Brother has been set in enmity against brother, neighbour against neighbour, and nation against nation, fully charged with vengeance to destroy each other, and by which rivers of blood have been spilt. Jesus Christ, I believe, never said one word that could be construed into any such meaning, or to countenance any such doings; neither did any man possessed of the spirit of the Christian religion and its attendant humanity ever view all this otherwise than with horror.

It would be a tedious and an irksome task to give even a list of all the religions, as they are called, from the days of Paganism, down to the present time. Truth long struggled with error, before system after system passed away. Notwithstanding the exertions of power to keep them up, they exist now only in story. But do the laws of nature ever alter? Do the sun, moon, and stars shine in any other way than they did to the votaries of Jupiter? Do the human passions operate in any other manner than they did thousands of years ago? No, indeed! Let us, then, rejoice that true religion is independent of human caprice; it is founded upon the immutable principles of truth, reason, and common sense, and therefore must be durable as nature itself. It is not vague and mutable: it is acquired by experience, not merely the creature of chance, habit, and prejudice: it is capable of demonstration like the principles of mathematics, and its necessity is evinced by the very nature of man in society. There is a rational and an irrational belief, and how can we distinguish the one from the other without reference to the reason of the thing? If reason be abandoned, then sense and nonsense are just the same: religion becomes a chaos, and faith has no merit. I therefore believe that no faith can be acceptable to God which is not grounded on reason; nothing but truth brings us lasting and solid advantage.

But it would appear that the teachers of mankind, in this important concern, have too seldom been actuated by these pure principles, and the "caring for men's souls" has been made only a secondary consideration. Their leading objects have been the establishment of a system of revenue and aggrandisement; and, to ensure the accomplishment of these ends, they began with children, well knowing that, when creeds and catechisms were once instilled into the infant mind, they would grow with their growth, and would acquire a firm-rooted footing; for, when early impressions and prejudices are once fixed in the the mind by ignorance, they can seldom or ever be eradicated. In this state, these victims to deception might have been made Pagans in India, Mahometans in Turkey, or disciples of Confucius in China: or, have been moulded into any of the various sects of misled Christians which have, like wens and carbuncles, often disfigured the comely face of religion, and the pure and plain doctrines of Christianity.

The next important step taken by these teachers, was to get this their religion, of whatever kind it might be, interwoven deeply into all the various governments of the different countries under their influence; but, preparatory to their religion becoming firmly established, the heads of it, who were called "saints" and "fathers of the Church," were gathered together to judge and determine upon the creeds and doctrines which were to be obeyed. Some of them might, indeed, be actuated by good and others of them by impure motives, but it always appeared to me like their own "act of parliament" to oblige people to offer to Omnipotence that kind of worship only which they had been pleased to dictate, and which by many is considered as arrogant presumption. But, when these doctrines were thus interwoven into all the different governments, they then became "part and parcel of the law of the land;" and, thus fenced, barricaded, and fortified, few ever dared to say that anything these laws promulgated was wrong; and, if any man whose mind happened to rise superior to superstition, ventured to publish his opinions of any of them, to show that they were absurd, then racks, tortures, inquisitions, and death, or fine and imprisonment, with attendant ruin, stared him in the face in this world and threatenings of eternal misery in the next. It is thus that the free exercise of the understanding, and the full use of all the means of advancing in religion, virtue, and knowledge, is checked and debarred; for, unless the free use of writing and publishing the well-digested opinions and plans of the lovers of mankind is allowed to go on without risk, all public improvement, which is or ought to be the chief end of every government to promote, is for want of this liberty, taken away. But in this business, government itself being entangled and bound by oaths to support present establishments, may perhaps be afraid to meddle or countenance any writing tending to a reform, or that may have the appearance of militating against this order of things.

But to dwell on this, the gloomy side of the picture, without noticing the other side, may be unfair; for the framers of unaccountable creeds set mankind a-thinking generally upon these and many other matters, which perhaps they would not otherwise have done; and, besides this, it is on all hands allowed that the monks and friars of old, amidst all their superstitions, preserved in their monasteries many records and much valuable knowledge, which, without their care, would have been lost to the world. Add to these, their charities to the destitute and their constant best endeavours to teach the grossly ignorant, and to reclaim the equally grossly wicked, part of the community, and in examining impartially into the change effected by the Reformation,—it amounts only to a lessening or setting aside a portion of the bigotry and superstition by which the old doctrines were enforced. Although one may lament that a more rational view of religion, and its very important concerns, had not been fully contemplated upon, yet even under its guidance, and with all its defects before the mighty change of the Reformation was effected, it would appear that the moral conduct of the common people was generally good, and they were in some respects happier and better off than they have ever been since. The Romish clergy, or priests, in those times, though they took the tithes (according to an old Jewish custom), yet these were more usefully and justly divided than they are in the present time; for they in their day took only a third part of these to themselves, and the other two-thirds were expended in building and repairing their churches and supporting all the poor. There was then no church cesses, nor poor laws, nor the sickening, harassing, and continual gathering of the enormous sums of the poor-rate.

The established clergy are also bound, in a similar way, by old laws and oaths which have been imposed upon them, to swear to their belief in a certain string of creeds before they are allowed to enter upon the clerical office; and all this, backed and encouraged by the lures of enormous stipends or livings attached to their church, which is furthermore made sure of by these livings being, as it were, held out as a provision for the unprovided part of the younger branches of the families of all the poor gentry of the land. Thus situated, any alteration or improvement may be looked for in vain, while self-interest and pride continue so powerfully to guide the actions of mankind.

Time, indeed, may bring about wonders, and the example and influence of North America can perhaps alone be looked up to to lead the way as the regenerator of the Old World. There they have none of the old protecting laws, nor the old prejudices of Europe, Asia, and South America, to contend against, and must see the errors these have fallen into, and may move forward upon clear ground. "The Rites and Ceremonies of all Nations" will serve them as a kind of text, and also as a beacon and a guide-post, to show them the way they ought to pursue, so as to steer clear of the absurdities—to say no worse of them—by which mankind have been so long led, hoodwinked, into so many egregious follies.

It must, furthermore, be observed and conceded on behalf of the present religious establishment of this enlightened and comparatively happy land, notwithstanding the spots and blemishes which bar the approach to rationality and perfection, that the regular clergy, with few exceptions, and taken as a whole —from their learning, their acquirements, and their piety—are real and valuable ornaments to our country, without whose help and the example they set, it is to be feared the people would soon retrograde into barbarism, or, into what is nearly as bad —fanaticism. To keep down or prevent this latter growing evil from rising to a height will require the utmost exertions of the regular clergy, as well as the united wisdom and prudence of the legislature to discountenance it. To attempt using force would only serve to unite its votaries and increase their numbers; for as long as ignorance is stalking abroad, multitudes will be found in every country who see things with an obliquity of intellect, and are thus ready prepared to adopt anything new, however stupid; and the reveries of Johanna Southcote, and the ravings of Ranters, do not appear to them sufficiently absurd.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

I HAVE, with all the consideration I have been able coolly to bestow upon the subject, become clearly of opinion, that the highest character a man can hope to attain to in this life is that of being a religious philosopher; and he cannot be the latter without religion being deeply impressed upon his mind; and, without the aid of religion and philosophy conjointly, he need not hope to feel all the happiness in this world attendant upon his approach towards perfection. The happiness derived from ignorance is like that of unreasoning animals; and, in carrying this a little further, or to the extreme, it is, comparatively, like the happiness enjoyed by a gate-post.

It is from amongst men of this enlightened character only that all and every clergyman ought to be selected, without permitting the least interference of private patronage; for that has been, and will continue to be, an evil of the most benumbing magnitude, which will—if not stopped—upset the best laid plans, and render such nugatory, or null and void. Could such a stride as this towards purity ever be accomplished, then every village ought to have its church, and would thus become a religious, a moral, and a patriotic little community, in which its preceptors ought to teach youth the usual routine of their education five days in the week, and those of all ages on the Sunday. This clergy ought not to be sworn to any belief, nor trammeled with any creeds, but only to promise, with the help of God, to instil into the minds of their hearers the purest religious adoration of the Omnipotent, and the best maxims of morality. In this the Scriptures would supply them with its pure and sublime precepts, and, above all, the still more sublime and amazing works contained in the great Book of the Creation is amply spread out before them, and made up of the living, the visible, words of God, so plainly to be seen, read, and felt, that howsoever miraculous and astonishing they are, it would require no stretch of faith to believe in them all. From these, such a clergy, one after another in succession for ages, might take their texts, ever new, and preach from them to all eternity; for, as to the number of subjects to preach from and explain, they would be found to be endless even on this globe we dwell upon, without soaring to those in the regions of immensity; and, if its wonders were productive of disease, enlightened men would die of wondering!

Were a clergy of this description established, there could be no fears entertained of their teaching anything wrong; they would, on the contrary, from their knowledge and virtue, be the pillars of the state and the mainstays and ornaments of civilization. Every church ought to have its library of good books, and its philosophical apparatus, to illustrate or explain the various phenomena of nature, and the amazing magnitude and distances of the "Heavenly bodies;" or, rather, the incalculable number of suns and worlds floating about with the velocity of light, in immeasurable, endless space. It is from these contemplations that something like the truest conception of the Adorable Author of the whole can be formed; and it would soon be found that men of common capacities, and without having even been taught to read and write, would be at no loss to understand the clear lectures delivered on this latter subject. I think it would be folly, or worse than folly, to entertain any suspicion that poor men, thus enlightened, would forget the station in which they are placed, and cease to work honestly to maintain themselves, or to become bad members of society. On the contrary, it is reasonable to conclude that such a universal spread of knowledge as would follow this system of education, and this kind of religious worship, would stamp the character of a whole people as intelligent, good, subjects; and it appears to me certain that, until such a mode of enlightened Christianity is adopted and acted upon, mankind will continue to be torn asunder, as they have too long been, and that, if it could quickly be spread over the partly civilized world, there would never more be any religious bickerings or animosities on that score, and that then, but not till then, all mankind would become as brethren.

I am well aware that the pride and the fears of what are called the dignified clergy, might operate powerfully against the purity and simplicity of such a change. If so, they will then thus clearly and decisively show that it is a system of revenue only, and not religion, that they can be fearful of upsetting; but, if none of these are deprived of their present livings (or an equivalent to their value), which they hold only during their lives, what have they to be afraid of? To sell their present enormous revenues, and fund the amount, and then divide the interest equally amongst the newly-established clergy, would be only fair and just; and they, above all other men, ought to be perfectly independent,—amply provided for, without being obliged to collect any other revenue, —and made as happy as men can be in this world; and, whatever might be deemed sufficient, a certain sum taken from this income ought also to be funded as a provision to support them in their declining years. Such a body of men as this clergy could not fail of being revered and held in the greatest respect and estimation by all good and wise men; and what more any good and wise man can wish for in this world, I am at a loss to know.

It is from government, with the aid of our own enlightened and liberal-minded clergy, and other such-like men, that this important business, in my opinion, ought to be openly and boldly taken up. They ought to have the honour to show the way, and not leave any other nation to take the lead of them in such a mighty and momentous concern, in which the happiness of the whole human race would become most deeply interested; and, from the change in men's minds which is now taking place, and widely spreading, this change, by its own weight, will most assuredly happen, perhaps at no very distant day.

Were our own government inclined to make this improvement in religion and politics, they would assuredly see the happiest results from it: it would soon be found that there would then be no need to keep Ireland in subjection, like a conquered country, by an expensive military force. The Irish, naturally acute, lively, generous, and brave, would soon feel themselves, under our excellent constitution, as happy and loyal a people as any in the world, and as much attached to their country, which, for its healthy climate and fertile soil, may match with any other on this globe. One would hope that the native gentry would at length see the very reprehensible injustice of becoming absentees. Landowners in all countries, as well as in Ireland, ought as far as possible to spend their rents where they receive them. Where they do not do so, any country is certain to become poor.* Ireland ought instantly to be put upon a par, in every respect, with their fellow subjects of the British Isles. To withhold Catholic emancipation from Ireland appears to me to be invidious and unjust; and, if emancipated, it would be found at no very distant period that they would, under the foregoing tuition, individually become enlightened, think for themselves, adopt a rational religious belief, and throw off the bigotry and superstition taught them with such sedulous care from their infancy, and by which they have so long been led blindfold. If they could be brought to think, and to muster up so much of the reasoning power as to do all this, they would soon emancipate themselves. But even on this business it must be observed that the Protestant Establishment does not interfere with the Catholic modes of faith; they may preach up and believe in what they please. In this they are not only fully tolerated, but are also protected in their worship, so that on this score they can have nothing to complain of. But beyond this the Protestant ascendancy, having all the rich church livings secured to themselves, are fearful that the Catholics, ever watchful, and never ceasing in their struggles to be at the head of all church affairs—they, the Protestants, have become extremely jealous lest the emancipation now so eagerly wished for may, if granted, be a prelude to further future strides, and that the latent objects the Catholics have in view is to partake in these rich livings, or to get them wholly to themselves. To dwell longer on these matters seems to me useless; for, so long as rich livings are set apart as a provision for those whose creeds continue in fashion, all the various numerous sects who dissent will always be barking at them, until the purity and simplicity of worshipping one God only can be established, and which to a certainty will one day happen. Till then, all arguments on this subject may seem to be in vain.

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* In my ardent wish for the perfect happiness and union of the sister Isles, I have suffered my sanguine imagination to wish and hope that some great convulsion of nature might some day happen to throw up the bed of the sea between them, so as to unite them both in one; and present a south-western rocky front to the ocean. I see no harm in indulging in such reveries; they may, indeed, be visionary, but they are innocent ones.

Having given my opinion on religious matters freely and sincerely, and with the best intentions, in which I do not wish to dictate, but only wish mankind to think for themselves on such a momentous and important affair as that of their present and their future eternal happiness, I leave them to their own reflections, and shall only furthermore attempt to show some of the salutary effects which I suppose would follow from mine. I first picture to myself that I see such a body of learned, rationally religious, moral, and patriotic men as this clergy spread over our already matchless country: and that the effects of their tuition and example, founded on honour and virtue, would very soon be seen and felt amongst all ranks of society, and would further exalt the character of our countrymen over the whole globe, as patterns for imitation to the rest of mankind. It is only by an education like this, that any country can hope that its institutions can remain unbroken up, and endure as a nation for ever; but so it will be, if the government is founded on wisdom and virtue, and backed by a whole people of the same character. To rear up and establish such a renovated order of things as I have with diffidence recommended, and coolly and deliberately to do away with old errors, will not, perhaps, be soon or easily done; for there are so many interests to consult, and so many men of the character to doubt and despair of accomplishing anything, however good, that, if they have influence over weak minds to help them out in this disposition to despondency, it will have the direct tendency to realize such doubts, and to throw a cold damp over the best and wisest plans. But we ought never to despair of accomplishing anything where our objects in view are good ones. To minds thus gifted, and such as this clergy it is hoped would possess, there could be little need to dictate. Their own good sense, aided by the gentry of the land, would constantly enable them to see when anything was going wrong in each little community, and speedily to rectify it. Such a number of little colleges spread over the land would excellently prepare such youths as might be intended to finish their education in colleges of a higher character, so as to fit them to fulfil the various offices of the state, in any of its several departments, as well as the many other employments they might be destined to pursue; and in this the teachers would have it greatly in their power to discover the talents or innate powers of mind of their pupils, as well as the bent of their inclinations, so as to be enabled to advise or direct inexperienced youths as to what might best suit their several capacities; and to point out to them the proper course of education that might lead to the calling or occupation in which they might make the most respectable figure when they were launched into the world. This duty of every teacher is an important one, and would require the keenest observation to make the true discovery; for, after all, we may be assured of this, that it is impossible to set bounds to the improvement of the human mind, and it is also equally so to limit the capabilities of the human frame when duly cultivated. . . . .

November 1st, 1828.

FINAL.

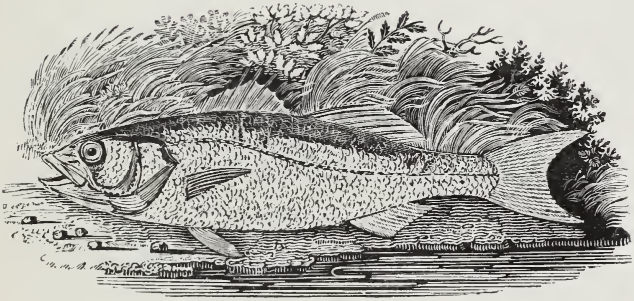
In offering these my sentiments and opinions, derived from the observations I have made in my passage through life, I have never intended to give offence to good men. With these sentiments some may be pleased and others displeased, but, conscious of the rectitude of my intentions, I do not covet the praises of the one nor fear the censures of the other. It is at another tribunal that I, as well as all other men, are to account for their conduct.

THOMAS BEWICK
GENTLY SIGHED AWAY HIS LAST BREATH
AT HALF-PAST ONE
ON THE MORNING OF THE
8TH NOVEMBER, 1828.

APPENDIX.

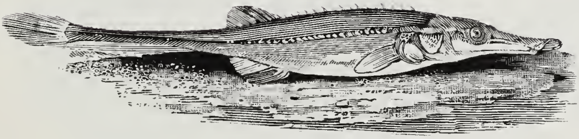
After Thomas Bewick retired from business in favour of his son, he continued, till his death, to employ himself closely, at home, in filling-up gaps in his History of British Birds; and, in conjunction with his son, he also commenced a History of British Fishes. The finished specimens of these, on the wood, are now for the first time published in this Memoir. A portion of a series of appropriate Vignettes, also executed by him for the work on Fishes, are now employed as embellishments in the preceding pages. About twenty of the set, together with six new birds, were printed in the last edition of the History of Birds. It may be proper to add, that the late Robert Elliot Bewick left about fifty highly-finished and accurately-coloured drawings of fishes from nature, together with a portion of the descriptive matter relating to the work.

BRITISH FISHES.



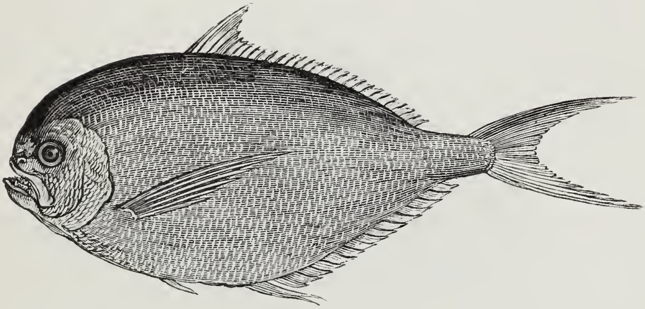
BASSE.

(*Perca Labrax.*—LINNÆUS.)



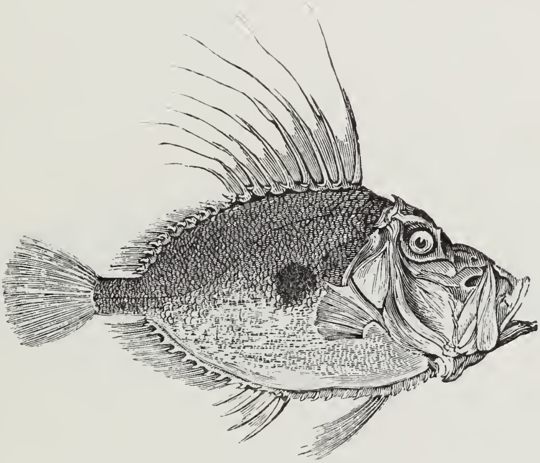
FIFTEEN-SPINED STICKLEBACK.

(*Gasterosteus spinachia.*—LINNÆUS.)



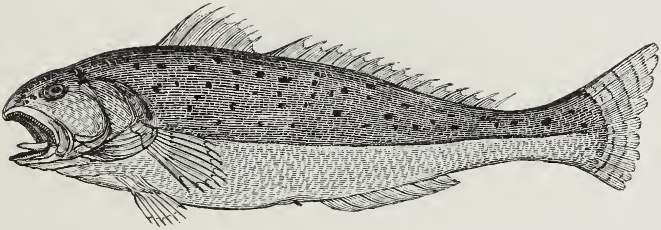
BREAM.

(*Sparus Raii.*—Bloch.)



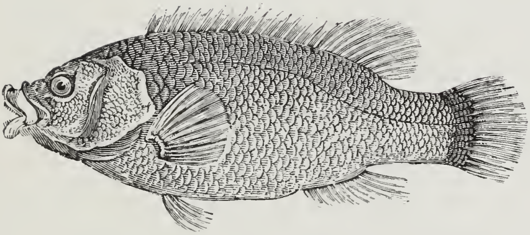
JOHN DORY.

(*Zeus faber.*—LINNÆUS.)



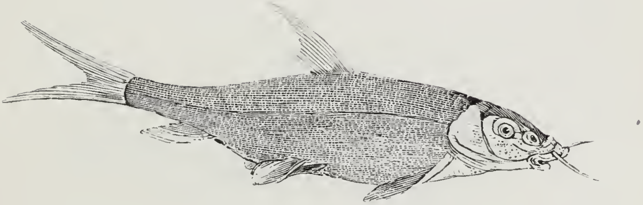
BLACK GOBY.

(*Gobius niger.*—Linnæus.)



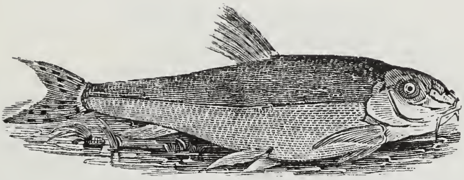
BALLAN WRASSE.

(*Ballan Wrasse.*—PENNANT.)



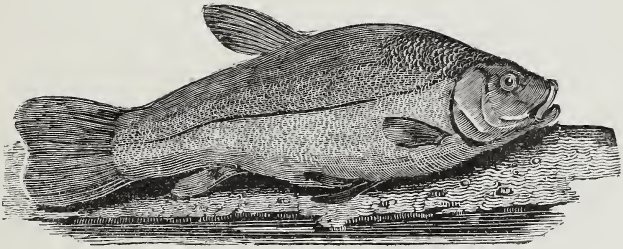
BARBEL.

(*Cyprinus barbus.*—LINNÆUS.)



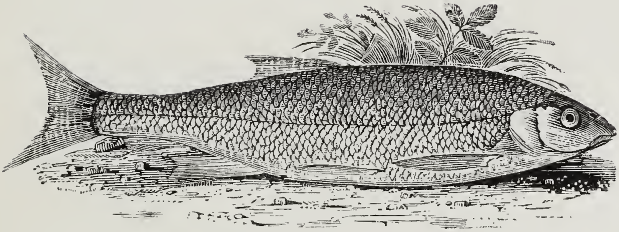
GUDGEON.

(*Cyprinus gobio.*—LINNÆUS.)



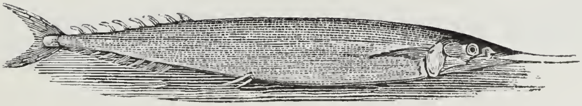
TENCH.

(*Cyprinus Tinca.*—Bloch.)



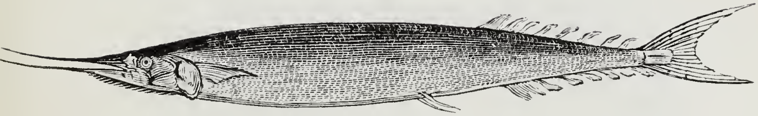
DACE OR DARE.

(*Cyprinus leuciscus*.—Bloch.)



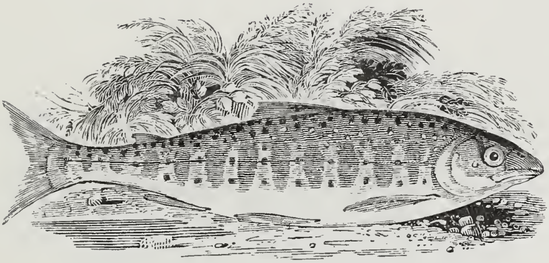
SAURY.

(*Esox Saurus.*—PENNANT.)



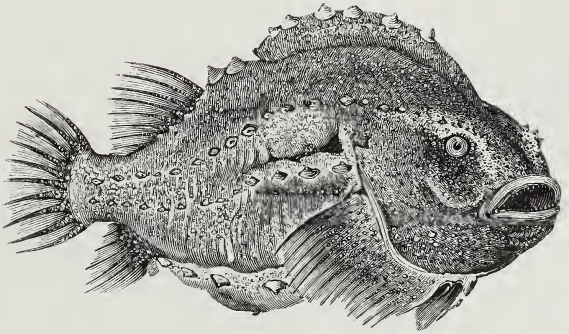
GAR FISH.

(*Esox Belone.*—LINNÆUS.)



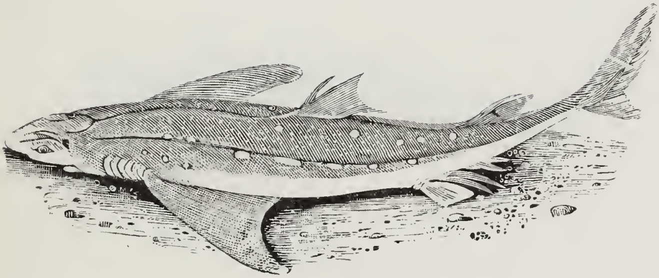
SAMLET OR BRANDLING.

(*Salmo Fario.*—LINNÆUS.)



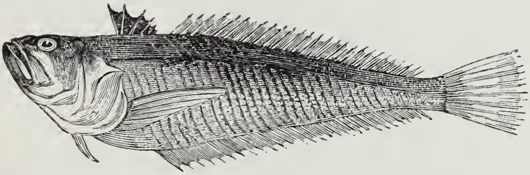
LUMP SUCKER.

(*Cyclopterus lumpus.*—LINNÆUS.)



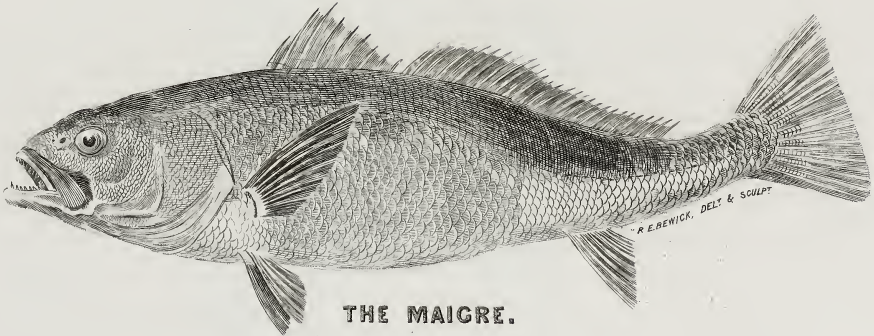
DOG FISH.

Squalus Acanthias.—LINNÆUS.



WEEVER.

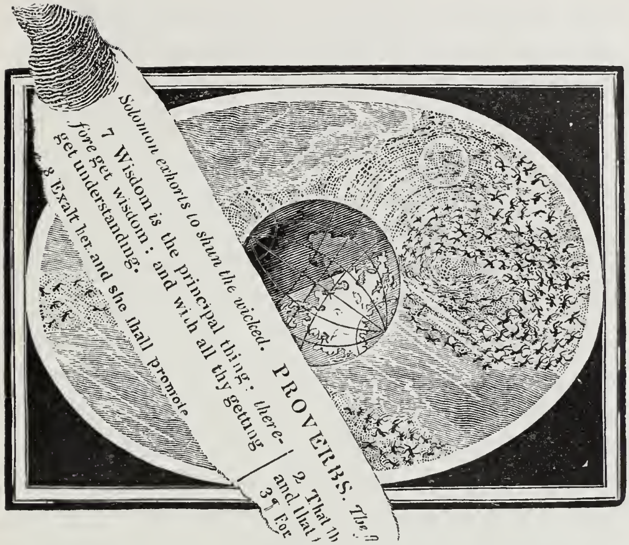
(*Trachinus draco.*—Pennant.)



R.E.BEWICK, DELT & SCULPT

THE MAIGRE.

(SCIÆNA AQUILA. —CUVIER)


Solomon exhorts to shun the wicked.
7 Wisdom is the principal thing: there-
fore get wisdom: and with all thy getting
get understanding.
8 Exalt her, and she shall promote
PROVERBS. The
2 That th
and that
3 ¶ For

THE ALARM.*

The hollow grumblings of the devils on earth having reached the infernal regions, Satan ordered an enquiry immediately to be made into the cause of their outcry, and commanded a trio of his choicest associates forthwith to fly with the velocity of light to see, and to report to him, what was the matter. On their arrival on earth, they were met, during the night, when men were asleep, by a deputation selected from innumerable hosts of imps from every kingdom and state of the uncivilized as well as the civilized world. They soon were given to understand, that an outrageous mutiny, amounting to rebellion, had been going on for some time against their old king, Ignorance, who was accused of having become very remiss and negligent of his duty. For this they resolved to have him hurled from his high station, and to have another ruler appointed in his stead. It was alleged that, owing to his neglect, mankind had lately begun to use their intellectual faculties to such a degree, that it was feared, if they were suffered to go on, Satan would (though very unjustly) lay the blame on them for the loss of his subjects. Old Ignorance was immediately brought to judgment, and at the same time other candidates for his office offered their services to succeed him. The voting instantly took place, and was decided in the twinkling of an eye, when it was found that old Ignorance was re-elected by a great majority; for, on casting up the votes, they stood thus:—

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* This fable was written and illustrated by T. Bewick, for his "Fables of Æsop," and is now published for the first time.

PRINCIPALS.	SATELLITES.	IMPS.
Ignorance.	Vanity. Superstition. Sensuality.	300,000,000.
Pride.	Arrogance. Envy. Obstinacy. Blasphemy.	100,000,000.
Malice.	Revenge. Injustice, Cruelty.	100,000,000,

Majority for old Ignorance......... 200,000,000

The candidates who had lately contended with him in aspiring to supreme command, having been appointed his chief ministers, he was sworn to redouble his vigilence: in return for which it was finally decreed that he should, in future, have seven links added to his tail, and his head adorned with six horns, instead of two. His infernal honour being thus pledged, the work of mischief was instantly begun, by his commanding his ministers and their satellites to redouble their vigilence, by throwing the mists of ignorance over the minds of the rulers and teachers of mankind, and to fill their minds with superstition, bigotry, pride, and arrogant zeal. All the imps of minor consideration were also ordered to direct the unreasoning, lazy, envious, wicked, gross, vulgar herd of mankind, high and low, into the paths which lead to misery. Having thus concluded their mission, the innumerable host set off, like a whirlwind, amidst the glare of lightning and the roar of thunder, to take up their abode in the minds of men, where they had been nursed before; but millions of their number, who had been dismissed from the minds of good men, dropped behind, and, in their fall through endless space, by the violence of their motion, ignited, were whirled into balls of fire, and gravitated to the sun. The rest proceeded; their numbers eclipsed the moon, and the effluvia which exhaled from them in their flight caused plague, pestilence, and famine in the countries they passed over, and the concussion they made in the air is said to have shaken the ices from the poles.

APPLICATION.

If there be a plurality of devils, Ignorance must be their king; and through his influence only men are wicked; and, under him and his satellites, the wretchedness they have dealt out to mankind ever since their chequered reign began has disfigured the fair face of nature; and they have too often succeeded, in the struggles between virtue and vice, in obscuring the reasoning powers of man, and bringing him down to the level of the brute. For no sooner was it decreed by Omnipotence that his reasoning creatures should live in a state of civilized society, suitable to their natures and befitting so high a behest, than these enemies to this good order of things obtruded themselves upon it, and have too long and too often succeeded in baffling the efforts of good men in their aims at approaching towards perfection, and in thwarting the progress of mental improvement, and the consequent happiness of the human race. They have, with the glimmering light of their *ignis fatuus,* led their devotees in zig-zag, backward and forward paths, through misty bogs and quagmires, into the midnight glooms and chaotic darkness which envelope their wretched dens. The bloody pages of history have in part recorded some of the many miseries which have from time to time been inflicted upon their victims; but to enumerate only a portion would be an irksome as well as an endless task.

PRINTS BY MEANS OF A SERIES OF WOOD BLOCKS.

The Author, at page 249 of this Memoir, in stating what he believes may be done by the printing of large wood cuts from two or more blocks, so as to rival the landscapes of William Woollett on copper, intimates his intention of making the attempt, to show that it is not a visionary theory. With this view, he executed a large wood cut, the subject being an old horse "waiting for death." A first proof was taken a few days before his death. An impression at the same time was transferred to a second block, the exact size of the first, and was intended to have been engraved to heighten and improve the effect of the print; and a third was prepared to be used if necessary. A few impressions of the first of the series were printed in London in 1832, and were accompanied by a descriptive history of the horse, written so far back as 1785. The print (in a finished state) was intended to have been dedicated to the "Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals," and was also meant to serve as one of a set of cheap embellishments for the walls of cottages. The history of the old horse "waiting for death" is subjoined.*

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* The vignette at page 53, vol. i, last edition of the "History of British Birds," will be found printed with two additional blocks as a title page to the second edition of the "Quadrupeds," quarto, without letterpress, 1824.

WAITING FOR DEATH.

In the morning of his days he was handsome, sleek as a raven, sprightly and spirited, and was then much caressed and happy. When he grew to perfection, in his performances, even on the turf, and afterwards in the chase, and in the field, he was equalled by few of his kind. At one time of his life he saved that of his master, whom he bore, in safety, across the rapid flood; but having, in climbing the opposite rocky shore, received a blemish, it was thought *prudent* to dispose of him; after which he fell into the hands of different masters, but from none of them did he ever eat the bread of idleness; and, as he grew in years, his cup of misery was still augmented with bitterness.

It was once his hard lot to fall into the hands of *Skinflint*, a horse-keeper, an authorised wholesale and retail dealer in cruelty, who employed him alternately, but closely, as a hack, both in the chaise and for the saddle; for when the traces and trappings, used in the former, had peeled the skin from off his breast, shoulders, and sides, he was then, as his back was whole, thought fit for the latter; indeed, his exertions, in this *service of unfeeling avarice* and *folly*, were great beyond belief. He was always, late and early, made ready for action; he was never allowed to rest, even on the Sabbath day, because he could trot well, had a good bottom, and was the best hack in town ; and, it being a day of pleasure and pastime, he was much sought after by beings, *in appearance*, something like gentlemen ; in whose hands his sufferings were greater than his nature could bear. Has not the compassionate eye beheld him whipped, spurred, and galloped beyond his strength, in order to accomplish double the length of the journey that he was engaged to perform, till, by the inward grief expressed in his countenance, he seemed to plead for mercy, one would have thought most powerfully, but, alas, in vain ! In the whole load which he bore (as was often the case), not an ounce of humanity could be found ; and, his rider being determined to have pennyworths for his money, the ribs of this silent slave, where not a hair had for long been suffered to grow, were still ripped up. He was pushed forward through a stony rivulet, then on hard road against the hill, and having lost a shoe, split his hoof, and being quite spent with hunger and fatigue, he fell, broke his nose and his knees, and was unable to proceed ;—and becoming greased, spavined, ringboned, blind of an eye, and the skin, by repeated friction, being worn off all the large prominences of his body, he was judged to be only fit for the dogs :—however, one shilling and sixpence beyond the dog-horse price saved his life, and he became the property of a poor dealer and horse doctor.

It is amazing to think upon the vicissitudes of his life : he had often been burnished up, his teeth defaced by art, peppered under his tail ; having been the property of a general, a gentleman, a farmer, a miller, a butcher, a higgler, and a maker of brooms. A hard winter coming on, a want of money, and a want of meat, obliged his poor owner to turn him out to shift for himself. His former fame and great value are now, to him, not worth a handful of oats. But his days and nights of misery are now drawing to an end; so that, after having faithfully dedicated the whole of his powers and his time to the service of unfeeling man, he is at last turned out, unsheltered and unprotected, to starve of hunger and of cold.

1785.

JOHN BEWICK.

THAT rare old book, "A Collection of all the Ancient Poems, Songs, and Ballads, relative to Robin Hood," published by Ritson, 1795, was embellished by John Bewick. Three of the cuts are introduced in the following pages. A comparison of them with the book itself, will show the great improvement which has taken place in the printing of wood cuts since that day. It may not, perhaps, be out of place to insert an extract from a letter, on the subject of these cuts, written by the antiquary to the artist, more than half a century ago.

"Gray's Inn.

"J. Ritson is sorry he was gone out when Mr. Bewick called ; but hopes he will proceed with the other cuts, which shall be left entirely to his own fancy, and in which he will undoubtedly consult his own reputation."...........

Amongst the many books illustrated by John Bewick, now very scarce, a few may be enumerated :— "The Looking Glass for the Mind," Proverbs Exemplified,"* The Progress of Man in Society," "Blossoms of Morality." The last-named was published by Mr. Newberry, to whom, for his charming little books, the rising generation of that day was under great obligation. In his preface, dated October 6th, 1796, Mr. N. says :—

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* The publisher, Dr. Trussler, quaintly observes, "It is a very proper book to amuse and instruct youth, and the price, viz. 3s., half-bound, will hurt no one."

" Much time has elapsed since the commencement of this edition, owing to a severe indisposition with which the artist was long afflicted, and which unfortunately terminated in his death. And sorry, very sorry, are we to be compelled to state, that this is the last effort of his incomparable genius."

CORRESPONDENCE.

The following letters are selected from a large correspondence, extending over many years, and, from the matter they contain, may not be thought uninteresting. The first is addressed to T. Bewick, on the occasion of his brother's death, by Mr. Wm. Bulmer, a native of Newcastle, and who is mentioned at page 70 as the first typographer of his day. A portrait of this gentleman is given in Dr. Dibdin's "Bibliomania" (?) in connection with the "Bodoni Hum." Mr. Bulmer died at his villa, Clapham Rise, Surrey, at the close of the year 1828.

WILLIAM BULMER TO THOMAS BEWICK.

Cleveland Row, December 10, 1795.

Dear Bewick,

The death of your brother has hurt me much, I assure you. He was a young man whose private virtues and professional talents I equally admired; so much so, indeed, that as a grateful tribute to his memory, I have this day clothed myself in mourning. His death has affected me in a manner that has much depressed my spirits. If my opinion or assistance in your intended record of his worth, on the melancholy tombstone that is intended to mark the place of his interment, can be of any use, I beg you will command me. The blocks for Mr. Way's work* have come safe to hand, but he informs me that you have omitted to send the head-piece to Tale Seventh, "The Mantle Made Amiss," which I must beg you will send along with the first parcel of blocks for the Chase; and, in cutting the remainder of Mr. Way's work, you will cut head and tail-piece in the regular succession, *agreeable to the numbers on the different sketches,* as any omission on this head causes an interruption in the printing. As to the blocks for "The Chase," I have already told you my situation. I must, therefore, entirely rely on your making a *bold effort to finish them in the specified time.* The whole number is only twelve blocks, besides the vignette for the title. Many of the tail-pieces are small. I wish fine execution in them, I confess, but yet there must be that happy mixture of engraving in them that will at the same time produce a boldness of effect. Mr. Way particularly requests that I will inform you that the blocks last sent are perfectly to his wishes. Agreeably to your desire, I have sent the death of your brother to the London prints. And believe me,

Yours, very sincerely,

WILLIAM BULMER.

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* "Fabliaux, or Tales abridged from French Manuscripts of the 12th and 13th Centuries. By M. Le Grand. Translated into English verse, by G. L. Way, Esq." 1796.

THOMAS BEWICK TO ——————

Newcastle, 4th October, 1794.

Dear Sir,*

I received yours of the 17th ult., and thank you for the opinion you have given me of America. Before I get the Birds done, I have no doubt of matters being brought to such a crisis as will enable me to see clearly what course to steer. My fears are not at what you think will happen in America: it is my own much-loved country that I fear will be involved in the anarchy you speak of; for I think there is not virtue enough left in the country gentlemen to prevent it. I cannot hope for anything good from the violent on either side; that can only be expected from (I hope) the great majority of moderate men stepping manfully forward to check the despotism of the one party and the licentiousness of the other. A reform of abuses, in my opinion, is wanted, and I wish that could be done with justice and moderation; but it is because I do not hope or expect that will take place in the way I wish it that makes me bend my mind towards America. . . .

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* It appears from the autograph letter here copied, that Thomas Bewick at one time contemplated emigrating to America. The name of his correspondent is not known.

MRS. M———* TO THOMAS BEWICK.

April 4, 1805.

I cannot resist the pleasure of thanking Mr. Bewick for the entertainment I have just experienced in looking over the second volume of the "British Birds." The vignettes are incomparable. The one with the string of the kite over the poor man's hat,—who cannot extricate himself, having to conduct his horse through the water,—and that of the man clinging to the arm of the tree, and, still more, the four little boys riding triumphant on the tombstones, without a moment's reflection on the mementos of death around them, are, I think, excellently done. The little drawing Captain M——— presented me with, from Mr. Bewick, will be placed in a book with the others I had given me at Newcastle, which I have the greatest value for, and shall be very happy, if either business or pleasure brought Mr. Bewick to London, to show them to him, in the highest preservation, and also to be introduced to his ingenious son, to whom I beg my compliments; and remain Mr. Bewick's very great admirer and obliged

S. M———.

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* The lady here indicated was the wife of an officer. She was an amateur artist, and was a frequent visitor when at Newcastle.

THOMAS BEWICK TO MRS. M———.

Newcastle, May 20, 1805.

Madam,

Your very kind and flattering letter of the 4th ult. has reached me, and I am happy to find that the second volume of the Birds meets with your approbation, and that some of my little whimsies put into vignettes have afforded you any entertainment. Could I have forseen that the sketches, which your partiality makes you value, would ever have been thought worthy of your notice, I certainly would have saved more of them for you, and not have put so many of them into the fire. And now, if my time and attention were not so fully taken up with conducting other parts of my business, I could easily furnish such without end; but, when the fancies pop into my head, I have not time even to commit them to paper, and I am often obliged to sketch them at once upon the wood. A second edition of both volumes of the Birds is now at press; and, as I believe you wish me success, I cannot help informing you, that, in my opinion, Mr. Walker, the printer, is doing the work to look better than either of the volumes now before the public. He has seen some defects in his former mode of printing which he is remedying in this. I have just seen Aikin's "Annual Review," in which he dwells at large, in his criticism, upon the History of the Quadrupeds and the Birds. There are many misstatements, and some mistakes of the printer, but, otherwise, he has gone the utmost lengths in praise of the whole; and, if his praise be just, it is highly flattering to me. I never hoped to have any compliments paid to me as an author. I furnished all the original remarks, &c., for the Quadrupeds, and the first volume of the Birds; but, if I could have got any person to write a book for me, I would never have thought upon writing the second volume myself. Necessity—not choice—set me to work in this way. It was the work of the winter evenings, at my happy fireside, surrounded by my wife and girls at work, and cheered at intervals by many a wild tune on the Northumberland pipes, played by my now stout, healthy boy.

I am, Madam,
With best wishes for your health and happiness,
Your much obliged servant,
THOMAS BEWICK.

P.S.—Should business take me to London, I will certainly take the liberty to give you a call. My boy thinks himself much obliged to you for your attention and great kindness to him. I would fain indulge him with a visit to London, but I think he is too young yet, and I have some fears that I shall feel awkward at parting with him even for a short time.

THOMAS BEWICK TO ———————*

Newcastle, 15th Nov., 1808.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the fourth inst., enclosing your promissory note at six months, came safe to hand. Having calculated upon being sooner paid, I was, I confess disappointed; but, however, on thinking all matters over respecting your present expenses in, as yet, an unproductive publication, and remembering your continual good wishes towards me, I now see that I have to thank you for the above remittance. You make me smile when you talk of my "accumulated wealth." I might, indeed, have been, by this time, as rich as I ever wished to be, if my publications had been . . . .
but that not being the case, that day must be longer put off. It may, indeed, happen all in good time, viz., when I am unable in the line of my business to be longer useful to the world. I may then, indeed, in the down hill of life, have it in my power to attain to the summit of my wishes, in retiring to a cottage, by a burn side, surrounded with woods and wilds, such as I was dragged from when young to exhibit myself upon the stage of the busy world. To such a place as this I hope to retire; and, if I

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* An eminent publisher by whom he had been employed to embellish an extensive work.

am enabled to show kindness to old friends, and to be a good neighbour to those around me, and at the same time to fill up my leisure time in contemplation, and in the amusements of fishing and gardening, then I shall think that Providence has been pleased to single me out to be one of the happiest of men. I intend to go to press in the spring with a new edition of the Birds, printed with the same kind of small type as the Quadrupeds: the two volumes in one volume demy. I wish much to have one of your books, but I cannot engage in the sale of them, being sufficiently embarrassed with my own publications.

T. B.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE:—
ROBERT WARD, PRINTER, FOOT OF DEAN STREET.

Bewick born	1753
Quadrupeds first published	1790
Birds first vol.	1797
2nd d	1805
Aesop's fables	1818

Salmon in the Tyne p 222

No. of impressions from a woodcut. p. 243

Bewick died 1828

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